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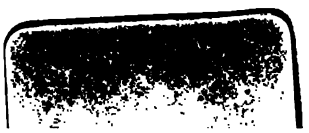

NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY

FROM

HERAUT TO KHIVA, MOSCOW,

AND

ST. PETERSBURGH,

DURING THE

LATE RUSSIAN INVASION OF KHIVA;

WITH

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE COURT OF KHIVA AND
THE KINGDOM OF KHAURISM.

By MAJOR JAMES ABBOTT,

BENGAL ARTILLERY,

AUTHOR OF THE "T'HAKOORINE," AND LATELY ON A POLITICAL MISSION.

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THE arrival of Saleh Muhummud was evidently a cause of uneasiness or anxiety to Ahris Mhatoor. He had, perhaps, made other arrangements for my disposal, or he might fear that his own importance, and his claim upon me as my protector, might be impaired by the circumstance. I sometimes fancied he had sold me to my enemies, and was now confounded by the prospect of my deliverance. Be this as it may, he stalked about with a fallen countenance. Cherkush Bae was evidently uneasy, but shewed it in a different way. His constant attention to me was unaltered, excepting, perhaps, that he appeared to render it now more of constraint, or as if he thought it less acceptable than before. I endeavoured to alleviate this feeling, as far as possible, by bestowing much of my attention upon him, and speaking to Saleh Muhummud of the important service this kind Kuzzauk had rendered me. I also called the brothers to me, and gave Ahris the letter, which I had written on a former occasion, and which made him master of all the property he could recover

from the Kuzzauks, and deprecated the anger against him of Mooraud Ali and others. I assured him, in front of an assembly of his friends, that I held to the agreement I had made with him and his brother, when my fortunes were at the lowest ebb. That, on conveying me and my people in safety to Khiva, the aforesaid property became his and his brother's; or, if he preferred it, I would purchase it with gold. That I still desired him and his brother as my escort, whatever arrangements Mooraud Ali might make. That, in short, as the English acknowledge but one God, so have they but one word, and abhor a breach of promise.

That night I lay down to rest under different feelings. Saleh Muhummud insisted upon sleeping near me, his sabre carefully laid at his side. Ahris' little daughter took up her position on my other side: I fancied, from some kindly feeling, in the prospect of so soon parting from me for ever. The looks of Ahris Mhatoor were unusually gloomy, and his countenance, under such circumstances, was portentous. He might, in a fit of desperation, have got rid of me, and have fled with the jewels in his possession, to the Russian frontier. Some such idea made me reluctant to the presence of Saleh Muhummud, which was no protection, but would have involved him in my fate. But he would not be denied; and to have told him my doubts, would only have strengthened his determination.

The ensuing morning, the camels and horses were brought, and Ahris Mhatoor assembled all his relatives and friends to hear read, and see delivered to him, in my presence, the Toorkish letter which gave him right to all property of mine he could recover from the Kuzzauks, upon my safe arrival with him and his brother at Khiva. In this assembly again appeared a messenger from Hussun Mhatoor, entreating me to come to the tent, to which he was hastening; and making a thousand protestations and promises. I re-

plied, that if Hussun Mhatoor had anything to say to me, he must wait upon me; and that I marvelled he could not have contrived to do so already, as two of his messengers had reached me. I was much annoyed to find Ahris urging me to comply with this invitation.

After much delay, owing to a quarrel between Cherkush Bae and some neighbours, the cattle were pronounced to be in readiness, and I took leave of the two families, whose tents I had so long shared. The brawny daughter of Cherkush Bae came and blubbered over me. I kissed the children, and shook hands with the women, and, mounting Saleh Muhummud's horse, at his especial desire, started with my four servants, mounted in various ways. The two brothers and two of their servants attended. Ahris was in the fidgets to persuade me to proceed to Hussun Mhatoor's rendezvous. I felt convinced that Hussun must have gained him to his own views. Cherkush said nothing, but walked on, leading one of the camels. He was out of spirits, and the minds of all were more or less saddened; for we were plunging anew into difficulties and danger, without the means of resisting like men, or of making any preparation for overcoming difficulty. All of us, excepting Saleh Muhummud, were unarmed; and I rode with difficulty, from the pain occasioned by the motion of the horse, which brought the ends of the severed bone in constant friction together. Half a dozen children, mounted upon jackasses, had ridden down my whole cavalcade.

We had not proceeded many minutes up the valley when we met eight Kuzzauk horsemen, four of them chiefs, and *all* my bitter enemies. They saluted me, and said they were come to beg me to meet Hussun Mhatoor at a neighbouring camp, where measures were in progress for the recovery of my property. I replied that I had made over to Cherkush and Ahris all recoverable property, and should proceed straight to the tent of the Yuze Baushee, Mooraud Ali. Finding

persuasion vain, they tried intimidation, assuring my people, with menacing gestures, that they would not suffer me to proceed, would seize me, and sell them, etc., etc., etc. One of these chiefs was the cool fellow who had before threatened to exchange me for Kuzzauk prisoners at Dahsh Gullah. They placed themselves in our path, and by all possible means endeavoured to obstruct our progress. I every instant expected they would have proceeded to violence, and had some apprehensions that Saleh Muhummud, being armed, might resent their insolence. I warned him strictly against this. The scene was very exciting. These men had unlimited power over us, backed as they were by the villain Hussun. How long their reluctance to any open violence to their king's guest might last, it was impossible to say; but a feather's weight would have turned the scale: for my return to Khiva must have seemed to them their certain destruction. They entangled Ahris in long discussions. Several times he seemed about to yield: but Cherkush pressed resolutely on, and beckoned me to do the same. As we continued, the whole valley turned out to see, to follow, and to throng us. Numbers of them placed themselves in our path, and strove, by expostulation and threats, almost by force, to persuade me to follow the path which, branching to the right, led to Hussun's tent. They even instructed the guide to lead us there, and he had actually taken advantage of the divergence of the paths, to act according to instruction, when I discovered the treachery, and altered our course accordingly.

A clump of about thirty horsemen followed, or accompanied us. A man, in a red bonnet, sat with a companion upon a camel, following me, but at some distance. Whenever I turned, he hid his face, which excited my suspicion. I therefore pulled up, and suffered him to pass me. In spite of his efforts to conceal his features, I recognised Yar Muhummud, the man who had wounded me, and had subsequently

been most active toward my destruction. The presence of this creature, miserable as he was, boded me no good; but, as others were gradually falling off, and taking the road to Hussun Mhatoor's tent, I hoped he would speedily follow their example. In this I was disappointed. At the foot of the cliffs we were approaching, nearly all the horsemen diverged from our path: but Yar Muhummud continued to haunt me with his hateful presence, like the crow which hovers over the hunted stag, mocking the fleetness which shall avail him nothing, and abiding coolly the inevitable hour. He kept aloof from me, and dared not meet my glance. It were difficult, perhaps, to describe how hateful and boding was the presence of this man. But give the stag above alluded to human reason and intelligence, and some faint notion may be drawn. Heaven had sent me, however, an antidote in the bright, never-doubting, ever-hoping spirit of Saleh Muhummud, which was like a wave of sparkling water dashed upon the care-soiled mirror of my mind.

I constantly summoned him to my side. His very voice was full of hope. He seemed to have been born under some happier aspect of the heavens; to live in some current, inaccessible to others, where trouble and care were unknown terms. He pointed out to me the course he had taken over the desolate steppe, where the only landmark is an occasional tomb; where man is less than a drop in the ocean: because for that drop there is society and kindred; whilst man is an outcast, disowned of all he sees.

After proceeding about twelve miles, we arrived at the brink of some lofty chalk cliffs, formerly the binding of some strait of the Caspian. Cherkush Bae was very anxious to halt in this spot; but I would not listen to the advice, as it seemed to me certain that we should be pursued during the night by some of Hussun Mhatoor's horse, and that our sole chance of safety lay in reaching, ere morrow, Mooraud Ali's tent. We therefore descended the

cliffs by a path narrow and broken, steep and difficult, where a stumble or careless step of horse or camel would have launched the rider into eternity. It was a dreary ride, which I shall not soon forget. How different from our last flight, when, nevertheless, death pressed us hard. Then there was a thrill of triumph in my mind, a consciousness of power and resources, which might be overmastered, but not without the struggle that is dear to the soldier, or the hope of resting in a soldier's grave. Now, I was a cripple, my people were cowed, weak from low diet, mounted upon broken-down nags, unarmed, three in slavery, one an idiot, the others capable of looking on our prospects with only a jaundiced eye.

As to those prospects, only the gay spirit of Saleh Muhummud could have regarded them with much of hope. My return to Khiva was so certain a sentence of death to Hussun Mhatoor and his whole family (for the policy of Khaurism lops no branch, but uproots the entire tree), that it seemed incredible that he should suffer me to reach that capital. The intervening waste of 450 miles was entirely under his control; and I had already sufficient proof of his means and disposition to cut off my retreat, without himself appearing in the transaction. Since the attack made upon me, he had (as coadjutors, equally interested as himself in my destruction), the persons and families of some forty or fifty Kuzzauks. That he was acting in concert with these the events of that morning had proved. The extreme solicitude of the Kuzzauks that I should again trust my life to him who had betrayed me, could proceed only from the hopes they entertained, that Hussun Mhatoor would, in some way, screen them from the anger of the Khaun.

The descent of the cliffs, though sufficiently dangerous upon exhausted horses, was accomplished with difficulty, but without accident. I had begun to associate melancholy thoughts with the sight of cliffs.

It was from the cliffs of Mungh Kishlauk that I first gazed upon the sea, without a sail, and then back upon a desert without provisions, infested by dealers in human flesh. It was at the foot of the cliffs of the Caspian that I met with the first open opposition to my journey; and I had just descended those cliffs when I was attacked, wounded, and made captive. Since then the cliffs had seemed the wall of our prison. We never lost sight of them. I even observed, as I gazed around me, disjointed masses of rock, resembling the human form, but different in shape and colour from the former. These resembled Hindoo fuqueers; I looked on them only to reflect how vain are all such portents of evil or of good. How impossible, in fact, it is to pronounce upon any event, except by the fruit it produces. Yet there is a disposition to the marvellous in every clouded mind, and the impulse was often strong to yield to such delusions.

The continued presence of my cowardly and bitter enemy, Yar Muhummud, was a portent less questionable. At the foot of the cliffs I drew up my horse, and called Cherkush Bae to my side.

"Cherkush Bae," I said, "you have more than once saved my life. Are you now in league with my enemies? Do you not know that Yar Muhummud has ever sought my destruction? Will you throw away the gratitude you have purchased?"

"Yar Muhummud," he replied, "*was* your enemy; but now he seeks to make you forget the wrongs he has done you by the service he shall render. Some of these camels are *his*."

"But what is he doing here? Does he think I like the sight of him; or is he watching his opportunity to betray me, by bringing some of his family upon us in the night? You have laid me under many obligations, Cherkush. Carry us through the present difficulty, and you will find my promises less than the reward which awaits you."

"Upon the life of my only son, by all that is sacred, I am and will be true to you. If you like, I will dismiss Yar Muhummud."

"Do so! His presence here is not needed."

He accordingly ordered Yar Muhummud to begone, and that worthy was slowly and reluctantly obeying, when Ali Muhummud, who, in common with all my suite, had an especial hatred to him for his share in my misfortunes, took this opportunity of being uppermost to vent upon him some of his pent-up wrath. The torrent poured from his lips with a violence quite astonishing, aided and eked out by the execrations of Summud Khaun and Nizaum in pure Persian. It seemed as if all the wrongs Ali had endured, as a slave to cannibals for sixteen long years, were concentrated and expressed in the bitterness of his vituperation. I tried repeatedly to stem the torrent, but in vain. For I think there is nothing so unmanly as abuse; so humiliating as the impotent wrath, which has not sufficient self-dignity for concealment. Yar Muhummud was borne down and alarmed by it. But at length I contrived to make myself heard, and rebuked Ali for taking such old woman's revenge. "All you say may be very true, and Yar Muhummud may deserve it all. But when down, he is too despicable to be worth any man's resentment; and if he gets to-morrow the upper hand, as is not improbable, you will pay the piper."

We were now up to our horses' and camels' knees in a salt marsh, which stretches for miles, at the foot of these cliffs, and is about half a mile in breadth. It is a stratum of mud, iced to the thickness of an inch with salt, in a continuous crust. The salt yielded, like brittle ice, to the feet of the cattle, and the mud beneath rendered the passage toilsome and tedious. On emerging from this we ascended by a slope, the steppe covered with wormwood, and shewing here and there a wild flower, the sight of which was a refreshment. Cherkush Bae's assurances gave me something

more of confidence; but he urged earnestly that I should not deviate from the direct route to Khiva, for the sake of visiting Mooraud Ali, whose tent was said to be far away to the right, near a distant cliff. It was evident that he feared this chief; whether on account of the diminution in his presence, of his own and his brother's importance, I knew not. I was, however, of opinion, that our only chance lay in securing Mooraud Ali's good offices; for Hussun Mhatoor was to us what the falcon is to the wounded deer. He could, on the instant, outstrip and destroy us. I therefore persisted.

A new difficulty arose; on meeting another Kuzzauk, we were directed for Mooraud Ali's tent, in the very opposite direction from that first indicated, viz. in the direction of Khiva; and Cherkush Bae advocated the new course, saying that even should we fail of our object, we should be making headway to the capital, and that he and his brother would protect us, without other aid. This I knew to be impossible; and as Yar Muhummud, who was now a mile ahead of my cavalcade, had spoken to the second messenger, I gave his word no credence, but followed the first indication. Night fell upon us in this difficulty, and at ten o'clock we found ourselves at a Kuzzauk tent, still many miles from Mooraud Ali. I was, therefore, obliged to permit a halt, much against my inclination. But the fact was, that in the darkness of the night, with only a general direction as to the spot where Mooraud Ali had lately been encamped, any farther wandering would surely exhaust the cattle, which had already been ten hours on the road, but would not as certainly bring us nearer to our object.

We therefore purchased a sheep of the Kuzzauks; for Ali had, on the idea of being a servant of the Ghoosh Beegie of Khiva, been allowed to retain the money found upon him; and Nizaum once more, to his great delight, found himself frying meat for his master, a process unknown in Kuzzauk land We

slept upon the steppe that night, without alarm, although the previous symptoms had been questionable; and before daylight next morning I awakened the people, and started once more in search of the Yuze Baushie. Passing a Toorcumun on the road, I enquired the character of Mooraud Ali. He replied—

"He is a sordid and miserly wretch. In his house are many camel-loads of bread (as if in England one should say of 'turtle,') yet his very daughter, and she an only daughter, lives in the house of starvation."

This was the first hint I received of the bitter enmity subsisting between Mooraud Ali and the Toorcumuns of these parts. It gave me little comfort; for although evidently the speech of an enemy, it was all I knew of the Oozbeg, upon whom I was about to cast myself for protection. After advancing some miles farther, a large cavalcade of horsemen appeared in the distance, advancing towards me. These, I learned, were Mooraud Ali and his retinue. On a nearer approach, I perceived the chief himself, and observed that nearly all his attendants, amounting to 150 horsemen, were Kuzzauks.

We met, and saluted by shaking hands, without dismounting. He paid a few compliments; said that some time ago he had heard my approach, and had killed a horse and a young camel for my entertainment; but that, finding that I was escorted by his enemy, Hussun Mhatoor, he had abandoned his intention of riding out to welcome me; that he was only just now apprized of the evil which had befallen me; that now I was his guest, and, with God's blessing, my troubles should end.

Accustomed for some time past to read my fortunes and my fate in the countenances of men whose language was strange to me, I took a sharp survey of Mooraud Ali. He was a small, spare, meanly-dressed man, with hard features, high cheek-bones, a hawk nose, and a quick and wild eye. He wore the usual Oozbeg cylindric cap of lambskin, but it was small

and mean, and his old green cloak, of coarse broad cloth, was desperately shabby. But he rode a fine and fiery Toorcumun horse, and delighted to arouse its action, and display his entire command over it. He was such a figure as I could imagine, at the head of a hundred thousand horse, riding down the kingdoms of the East. The shabbiness of attire on such a spare, hard figure, lighted up by such a restless eye, would have been more readily attributed to indifference than to meanness; yet it did not *contradict* the verdict of the Toorcumun, and was no encouragement to one needing his hospitality. His eldest son, a soft-looking youth, of one and twenty, rode beside him. He embraced Saleh Muhummud as an acquaintance, and both commenced in Persian a conversation, from which I learnt that Saleh had met him whilst in search of me, and had been kindly entertained by him, and directed in his farther search. I, of course, expressed to him my thanks for the service he had rendered.

Mooraud Ali called Muhummud Ali, my interpreter, aside, and conversed earnestly with him, until we reached the spot of encampment. I was a little anxious for the result, because I had in more than one instance remarked the extreme carelessness of Ali as to the particulars he communicated, a carelessness screened from me in most cases by my ignorance of the Toorkish language. When, however, we reached the selected spot, I found Mooraud Ali more polite than before. He had learned of my interpreter the nature of my relations with Khiva, and knew better what was due to me than he could have conjectured from the shattered state of my fortunes and the shabby figures of myself and retinue. On reaching the spot selected for encampment, he dismounted, spread a carpet for me on the earth, and begged me to select the spot upon which he should pitch a tent for my accommodation. The tent soon appeared, and was pitched accordingly, and I invited Saleh Muhummud and my people to partake it with me. We had not

long enjoyed this new position, when Mooraud Ali and his son reappeared, bearing in their hands trays of sugar-candy and dried fruits, apricots, raisins, almonds. These, in spite of my expostulations, he presented with his own hand, remaining in attendance upon me, or leaving his son, when himself obliged to be absent. This graceful courtesy he never could be persuaded to forget for an instant. His reply to my entreaty, to leave our attendance to his servant, was quite worthy of the hospitable and generous conduct which illustrated it.

"I myself have been a prisoner, and know what are the feelings of the captive. I myself have been an ambassador, and know what is due to that high office. I myself have been delivered from bondage, and know how sweet is liberty to the ransomed. I was sent by the late king, Madreheem Khaun, on an embassy to Tehraun. Abbas Meerza seized and cast me into prison, where I remained seven years, and then sold me for 80 tillas (about 48*l.*) At length the Khaun Huzurut forgot in my sufferings the indignity offered him, and sent to ransom me for 1000 tillas."

"But," I insisted, "complete your kindness by sitting beside me. You have done me much honour; complete it by honouring me with your society."

He was, with difficulty, persuaded to sit at the farthest corner of the carpet, and to eat one morsel of the food with which the trays were covered; to us the most delicious of dainties.

"The blessed Muhummud, peace be to you," he said, "was asked by the blessed Ali, whom he was to consider the most honourable amongst men? The prophet, without hesitation, answered, 'Your guest.'"

"It is an excellent saying," I replied, "and if there can be any greater than a guest, it is he who knows, and practises what is due to a guest."

"You," said the Oozbeg, "are more than a guest, for you are guest of the Khaun Huzurut, whose slave *I* am. I never can render sufficient honour

to one, whom my sovereign regards in that sacred relation."

"Ool-humm'd-ool-illah," shouted Summud Khaun, stroking his beard with both hands. "It is a good thing to wait God's will. It is a good thing to trust God. Didn't I tell you, Sir, when you were wasting your mind with thought of what was to be done, that it was good to wait?"

"Very true, patience is good. But it is also good to employ the faculties bestowed upon us. If a swimmer fall into the sea, it is good for him to trust God: but it is also good that he should strike out lustily, or the chances are, that he will go to the bottom. Wait awhile, and let us see the end of all this: for it is unwise to rejoice in the sight of fruit, until we know the tree on which it grows. I have lived long enough to judge of things rather by their end, than their beginning."

In spite, however, of this sordid caution, I felt my spirits rise, as I looked around the little circle, enjoying, after so many privations, the repast most congenial to their taste, the dried fruits of their native land: and heard the word, "Shookha," (thanks) resounding from every mouth. In fact, it is bad taste, and unsound philosophy, to let slip the present, because the future may not correspond. And I could not, just then, afford to be a man of false taste, or an imperfect philosopher.

I had not enjoyed above a taste of the dainties before us, when I missed Cherkush Bae and Ahris Mhatoor, and my heart smote me, that I should for a moment have forgotten them. I spoke to my kind host, but found, from his reply, that he would not be pleased at their introduction to my circle. "I will spare their lives," he said, "since you command it. Otherwise, every one that had lifted a hand against you, should forfeit his head."

"You must do more than that, in justice, as well as for my sake. The Kuzzauks are wholly innocent

of this matter; a Toorcumun told them that I was a Russian spy, and that the Khaun had ordered my destruction; and they did what appeared to them their duty, in attacking me. The Kuzzauks must, therefore, come to no harm on my account, excepting always the guides, who knowing exactly who I was, and being my guests at the time, for they were fed from my table, deliberately betrayed me. For these men I have nothing to say. But he that would shew me honour, and command my regard, must protect and cherish Cherkush Bae and his brother, and I must have your promise to this effect."

Mooraud Ali promised, but I thought with reluctance. He sent for the brothers, however, and told them, that as I had interceded for them, he forgave them their share in the violence offered his sovereign's guest. I feared to make him their enemy, by insisting upon their joining us at meals, but sent them out a Benjamin's portion of good things, with a message, explaining the restraint under which I laboured.

Saleh Muhummud, as may be supposed, exhibited on this occasion the highest spirits. After lavishing upon me the most respectful and affectionate attention, he talked of Heraut and Todd Sahib, and his (Saleh's) father, the old villain who attempted my ruin at Khiva, and by degrees, settled upon his own home.

"Are *you* married, Sir?" he inquired.

"No."

"Is Todd Sahib?"

"No!"

"Login Sahib?" meaning Dr. Login, in medical charge of the mission.

"No!"

"No! and isn't Sanders Sahib?"

"No!"

"Nor Shakespear Sahib, nor North Sahib?"

"No!"

It was some time before he could quite recover his astonishment. Indeed, I have observed, that in cen-

tral Asia, none of our mysteries of steam, telescopes, alchemy, coat tails, cock's feathers, freemasonry, bare heads, air-guns, detonators, smooth chins, cropped horse-tails, unveiled women, and boys* with one leg: no! not the magic lanthorn itself, so bewilders and impresses the fancy of Muhummedans, as, that an article made in pairs, should constantly be found separated; like the disunited legs of a pair of compasses, or a gross of boots for the right foot. It is vain to argue the point with them, and talk of tin kettles and wandering comets: for it is so easy they think, to have a wife at each important city, and thus be equally at home, whatever the clime. And to die without issue is regarded by them as an especial mark of the displeasure of heaven.

When Saleh had at length recovered from his amazement, he exclaimed, "What a pity it is, that you have no wife. I have such a sweet one, I cannot tell you how happy I am in her."

"Indeed; and how long have you been so?"

"Only two years, and my wife is so beautiful, so graceful, and so good."

"You are indeed happy, and in a happiness which my wandering destiny must ever deny me."

"Oh! I'll get you such a nice wife, when we return to Heraut."

* When the Indian mission was journeying through Persia, several of the Serjeants' wives travelled on horseback, in the usual riding dress of English women. They created no little wonder and speculation. As women in Persia travel close-veiled, it seemed clear to the natives, that these beardless folks were boys; and as both male and female ride there astraddle, the astonishment was extreme, at finding no leg on the off side. After staring awhile, the children would run round the near side, to see how matters stood there, and finding only one broad leg covering, would scamper, agape, into their houses, shouting, "O! Mammy, Mammy, come and look at the one-legged boys."

CHAPTER XXX.

Yar Muhummud—A new Sauce for Ragouts—Mooraud Ali's Proffer of Service—Arrival of Khojeh Muhummud—Of Hussun Mhatoor—His Proffer rejected—Release of my Servants—Angry Debates between the Chiefs—Mooraud Ali abandons me—I am left to the Mercy of Hussun Mhatoor—Eloquence of a Shawl—Part of the Plunder recovered—The Kuzzauk Brothers.

MOORAUD ALI now entered into arrangements for liberating my enslaved servants, and for the collection of the property that had been plundered. In the group of rude faces collected round the tent, I saw the hyæna eyes of Yar Muhummud, peering from behind a crowd of Kuzzauks. He was evidently in great perturbation, and my people were anxious to point him out to the Oozbeg as an object of vengeance. This, however, I would not suffer. I summoned the coward in front, and made Ali interpret my words to all present.

"That is the man," I said, "who wounded me, and who has since sought my life. He fled from me in daylight, when he was backed by five armed horsemen, and afterwards wounded me in the dark, when I was down, and grappling with three others. He is not worthy my vengeance. Yar Muhummud, I forgive you from my heart."

At about 11 o'clock my kind host entered, and placed before me a delicious pilau of young camel's flesh, the most dainty and expensive of dishes amongst the Tartars. It may be supposed that we all greatly enjoyed it after our long diet of sour curds. He and his son still waited exclusively upon me, in

spite of all my remonstrances; and nothing could persuade either to share in the banquet. Let those who disbelieve in the happiness which sensual gratification is capable of conferring, try a diet of sour curds, diluted with snow water, in quantity sufficient to leave the stomach ever humming for more, and, having kept up the abstinence for a month or so, sit down quietly, under a blue sky, to a pilau of young camel's flesh, dressed by Mooraud Ali's cook, probably his fair daughter. The remembrance of it has haunted me ever since. It makes my mouth water after dinner; and yet I am one who have generally no relish for dainties, and who have always lived upon the simplest fare. Undoubtedly, the sense of deliverance sweetened the repast, as Harvey himself, or Tapp, never could have seasoned it.

After dinner, Mooraud Ali entered the tent to consult with me upon my affairs. I produced the Khaun Huzurut's letter, in which the purport of my journey is set forth. I explained minutely the extreme importance of my mission, and proved to him, that the injury I had sustained in property and person was a mere joke, in comparison of the mischief which might, in consequence, result to his master.

He replied, that he deeply regretted the injury and interruption I had sustained, and was ready to assist me in whatever manner I might dictate, either by escorting me to Dahsh Gullah, or to Khiva; or that, if I preferred awaiting there the Khaun Huzurut's further instructions, his tent, and all it contained, were my own.

I was still bent upon the prosecution of my mission: I believed, indeed, that I was too late to be of any service, and that the Russian army must now be close upon Khiva. But I had no right to calculate as certainty, a matter of chance, and I felt that my duty still called me forward. The question, however, was perplexing; for, whereas the journey to Khiva, under such auspices, was perfectly safe, that to Dahsh Gullah

was attended with great risk, and I was not certain that it was practicable. All the hospitality and courtesy of Mooraud Ali, could not at that moment quite satisfy me, without farther knowledge of his character. In journeying, indeed, toward Khiva, where reward must await him, I could depend upon the broad basis of self-interest for security. But the other route, at the moment of a Russian invasion, offered no such inducement. Property, of extreme value in the eyes of Tartars, was to be recovered and refunded. All this, a dagger-stroke would bequeath to my guide, and the mischief could always be laid to the Russians. Many consultations had been held as to the practicability of this route, but it had always been declared by the Kuzzauk brothers as out of the question. I had no hesitation on my own account, for the journey to Khiva proffered me only disgrace and misery; but, when I thought of my servants, of all they had already suffered and must suffer, and perceived their extreme dread of the journey to Dahsh Gullah, and their anxiety to return breaking forth in every word they uttered, my resolution failed. I knew that I could always alter my destination from Khiva to Dahsh Gullah, but that the reverse would be difficult, if practicable. I thought that, without abandoning the project of an advance, I ought, for the present, to set my face as if bound for Khiva. This would keep enemies in awe, and I should be able to sound my way, ere I decided upon proceeding to Dahsh Gullah. I replied, therefore, that I would thankfully accept his escort back to the capital. That then, if the Khaun Huzurut thought fit, I would ride post to the Russian frontier.

"You accept *my* escort, then?"

"I do, with all my heart."

In the evening, he again entered the tent, and said, "Hussun Mhatoor will be here to-morrow. Will you go with *him*, or with me?"

"Can you enquire? Have I not already suffered

enough from his arrangements?" I was careful not to betray my knowledge of his direct treachery. "I will take your escort at every risk, unless you have repented your offer."

"Well then," he said, "leave all to me. Hussun Mhatoor will threaten and bluster. You will hear much uproar; give it no heed, but stretch out your legs, and take your ease."

Next morning, the arrival of the Yuze Baushee Khojeh Muhummud,* was announced, son of Hussun Mhatoor. I have already mentioned the high character borne by this young man. He now entered the tent, a tall, handsome young fellow, of dark complexion, with regular features and fine eyes, which were ever bent upon the earth. He evidently paid much attention to his personal appearance, being the best dressed Toorcumun I had seen. He wore a vest of crimson silk, over that a red silk cloak, and over all, a cloak of blue broad cloth, trimmed with otter's fur. His belt was a leathern thong, passing twice round the waist, studded with stars of massive silver, each of which, being perforated, formed an eye to the hook by which the belt was drawn. His head dress was the Oozbeg cap of black lambskin, and several finely-carved, and richly-mounted knives and poniards depended from the belt beside his sabre.

I would not rise to receive him, but allowed him to take my hand between both of his, and signed him to be seated. He expressed regret at my misfortunes, and that he had not been at Mungh Kishlauk, to escort me in person to Dahsh Gullah. I replied, that when at Mungh Kishlauk, I had anxiously looked for

* Sir R. Shakespear, upon whom this young chief attended after my departure, took a much less favourable view of his character. I was guided wholly by the reports of him which my servants had received from his father's domestics and slaves, and from some Kuzzauks of the steppe. His down-look was scarcely prepossessing, and he was probably not much better in moral character than other Toorcumun chiefs. But there must have been some strongly-redeeming quality in his natural disposition to make him so great a favourite with the servants and slaves of his father's household.

his appearance, as almost the only reasonable hope of safety; but that his movements seemed so uncertain, that I could not wait in the prospect of a meeting; that, had we met, my misfortunes had never overtaken me, for that, having the highest opinion of his honour, I should have been guided implicitly by his advice.

He thanked me, dropped his eyes to the earth, and was silent. At length, he said, "But what is the cause of your enmity to Hussun Mhatoor?"

"Have I ever expressed such a sentiment? Have I ever treated him otherwise than with the highest distinction?"

He was again silent, but at length resumed, "Why did you quit Mungh Kishlauk? Did not my father send a man after you, to tell you that the Russian boats had arrived there, and to bid you return?"

"The man he sent declared solemnly that he had not even seen your father. If boats were really there, why did your father not send some one whom I had seen about him, one of his own Toorcumuns? Why was he ashamed to acknowledge the message?"

He again dropped his eyes, sighed, and was profoundly silent, sitting more than an hour in that posture, in a corner of the tent. I was disappointed that he should seem to favour the forgery his father had attempted to pass upon me. Still, it was but the duty of a son to screen his father's faults."

Towards evening, Hussun Mhatoor was announced. He came attended by no less than three Yuze Baushees, including his son, and had beside a considerable retinue of Toorcumuns. I had always, even when most disgusted with this villain's misconduct, treated him, from policy, with marked consideration; with more a great deal than was his due, considering our respective rank and office; rising to receive him, offering him the first cup of tea, etc. His age freed me from embarrassment in this. I had since fallen from my high estate; he was here a little sovereign.

I felt, however, prouder now than before, and continued sitting when he entered, scarcely allowing him to take my hand, and pointing him a seat considerably below me. But when Mooraud Ali immediately afterwards entered, I rose, a motion which all were, by etiquette, obliged to imitate; and although he was a far less person than Hussun Mhatoor, I pressed him to take a seat above my own, addressing him as my benefactor. Nothing could persuade him to this, but my purpose was sufficiently manifest, and Hussun Mhatoor felt it.

He looked at my bandaged hand, and pretended a world of grief at my suffering. "I own," he said, "that I have committed a great error; I should have sent my own son and a party of horse to escort you; I hope you do not still suffer much pain?"

"I suffer whatever it has pleased heaven to allow," I replied, cutting him short. He was disconcerted. At length, after long silence, he resumed.

"I have collected much of your property. The rest will be recovered in a few days. Forgive me what is past; I will do whatsoever you command me."

"You have come too late; I have made a solemn agreement with my kind host, Mooraud Ali, to benefit by his escort to Khiva."

"If *he* conducts you thither, the Khaun Huzurut will slay me and my whole family. I have made the utmost haste to your assistance, but, unfortunately, you would not wait for me. What is my crime? When I was with you, did you ever lose so much as the value of a whip?"

"No; the fear of the Khaun Huzurut was all powerful."

A long silence ensued, which was at length broken by Hussun. "Why will you not prosecute your journey, since it is of such importance to the Khaun Huzurut? The Khaun ordered you to embark at Mungh Kishlauk."

"The Khaun Huzurut gave me no *orders*, because I am the ambassador of a greater Government. He gave me permission, but declined giving me orders. When he gave me that permission, I was an envoy. Now I am a cripple. How can I tell whether he will wish his letters to be borne, himself to be represented at foreign courts, by a cripple. I will see him and ascertain his wishes."

"You might write, and await his answer here."

"But I *will* not."

"Then let me or my son conduct you to his presence."

"When, at Mungh Kishlauk, I desired your escort to Dahsh Gullah, you replied, that the Khaun's orders were only to conduct me to Mungh Kishlauk, and you made me over to robbers. Have you any fresh instruction from the Khaun Huzurut, that you would now conduct me to Khiva?"

"I will swear upon the Koraun."

"The guide you gave me swore fearful oaths upon the Koraun, when I was his guest, sleeping amongst his children, and afterwards sold me to robbers."

After a long visit, and many vain attempts to shake my resolution, he left me. A stormy debate ensued, which lasted until late that night, and was renewed the following day. Mooraud Ali came to me at night to enquire after me; and it seemed to me that he was beginning to vacillate in the solemn covenant between us.

Meanwhile, measures had been taken to release those of my suite who were still in slavery. Hajji was brought back, then Yakoob, and at length Maimood. There was no end to the embracings between them and the others. Hajji had fallen to the lot of a stern master who treated him harshly. On day Kooch Muhummud, the Yuze Baushee, arrived at his master's tent, and had shewn some kind attention to poor Hajji, which I resolved should be repaid whenever I should possess the means. This little

incident came in aid of my preconceived notion, that Kooch Muhummud had in him something more of honesty and worth than the others, and might perhaps be relied on, could we separate his interests from those of his chieftain, Hussun. Yakoob and Maimood had both been kindly treated. The women of one of the families shewed the captive a thousand attentions, and resisted all his offers to assist in tending the cattle. They constantly lamented, that a son of their house should have been concerned in an assault upon the Khaun Huzurut's guest. In short, the result of my knowledge of this rude race was very favourable to them. The return of my people, and our re-union, was a great gratification to us all. My solicitude for them had been so constantly excited, that I had almost forgotten their character of domestics in affectionate concern for their welfare.

The debates between Hussun Mhatoor and Mooraud Ali became every hour more stormy; and every time I saw the latter, his resolution to protect me seemed more shaken. I was never present at these debates, but Ahris and Cherkush, who were constantly in attendance upon me, brought me word, from time to time, of the nature of the discussion. This was extremely disheartening, for it was evident that Mooraud Ali had already repented his proffered aid. Once the brothers came with tears in their eyes to say, "They have resolved to bind you hand and foot, and cast you on board a boat at Mungh Kishlauk."

"Who have?"

"Hussun and the Toorcumuns."

"And will Mooraud Ali permit it?"

"He has no power to resist it. The Toorcumuns are too strong for him."

"And the Kuzzauks, will they not back Mooraud Ali?"

"They are too much in awe of Hussun Mhatoor, who has long oppressed them." This was melancholy intelligence, but I was now hardened to encounter vicissitudes.

That night, Mooraud Ali came to my tent, and said, that Hussum Mhatoor had determined to be my guide.

I replied, "You have promised me your protection. Have solemnly agreed to escort me. I am your guest. You will not now betray me."

"I promised to conduct you to Khiva, *only* if Hussun Mhatoor should decline. He, however, insists upon guiding you, and the Khaun Huzurut gave him you as a guide. I have no plea for interference."

"You have abundant plea. You know perfectly well, that Hussun will never guide me thither. You know, how nearly I have been murdered already, and that the Khaun Huzurut's despatches have been almost lost. Will you abandon your guest?"

"I will send with you my son, he will be sufficient security."

He left me, and I was obliged to seek means of turning to the best account, an arrangement that threatened my destruction. All night I lay awake, discussing with Saleh Muhummud, the perplexities and perils of my position. His sanguine temperament shewed him all in a less gloomy light. He would not believe that any evil could befall a British Eelchie, when known to be such. He had just left Heraut, where Major Todd, the British Envoy, is so respected and venerated; and it seemed to him, that the remainder of my career must be something like a triumph. It was a relief to me, that the case *could* be viewed by any one in so cheerful a manner, for all the rest of my people were despondent. The bare idea of again becoming the victims of the arch villain Hussun, was enough to discourage those who had drunk so deeply of the cup of his treachery.

The next day, Hussun Mhatoor and the Yuze Baushees, Mooraud Ali, Sobut Beeg, Khojeh Muhummud, and Kooch Muhummud, accompanied by their followers, waited upon me. Hussun Mhatoor commenced by stating, that should any one but himself conduct me to Khiva, the Khaun Huzurut would

destroy him (Hussun), and all his house: that he trusted, therefore, that I would employ his services. That he was ready to conduct me, or to depute his son to conduct me whithersoever I pleased. To Mungh Kishlauk, where we should find boats in attendance, or to Dahsh Gullah, or even to Khiva.

I had already made up my mind upon this subject, and being as utterly in the villain's power as a bird in the fowler's net, and having no longer hope of the protection of Mooraud Ali, put the best grace possible upon my compliance; saying, that I would accept his offer, provided that his son, Khojeh Muhummud, and the Yuze Baushee, Kooch Muhummud, were placed in command of my escort, and that Mooraud Ali's son, and the Kuzzauk brothers should attend.

To this he readily assented, and the two Yuze Baushees were evidently flattered by my preference. Hussun, however, pressed strongly upon me, a choice between the routes to Mungh Kishlauk and Dahsh Gullah; but, as I did not believe there were any boats at the former place, or that he would ever convey me in safety to the latter, I insisted upon a return to Khiva, with which he very reluctantly complied.

The rest of the day Khojeh Muhummud was constantly near me, and Saleh Muhummud, whose handsome dress had struck his fancy, was lavish of his praises of British liberality. The shawl around his waist, was the gift of the British Envoy. Its value being explained, it had become an object of admiration and envy. "Oh!" said Saleh Muhummud, "this is nothing to the benefits conferred constantly by the British Envoy upon the nobles and people of Heraut. At the last festival, every officer of the state was handsomely apparelled, not by the king, nor by the Vuzeer, but by the British Government, whose agent the Kuzzauks have so barbarously treated. You ask me why I am so warm in my praises of the English, why I love strangers whom my fathers

never knew. Is it not enough to say, they have redeemed my country, that they are rebuilding my nation. That they feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter those who have no home. That they have raised at Heraut a hospital, in which our sick are cured and supported. That they have a troop of some thirty children of Heraut, rescued from slavery by Captain Pottinger, whom they feed and clothe, whom they educate in the faith, in which those children were born? Is it strange that I should love the English? or that *any* of my nation should be willing to give his life for them? I wish you could come to Heraut, to see what the English are. All that is good and noble proceeds from them. The evil is from our own rulers."

Whilst he ran on, in this way, with glistening eyes, I perceived that he had no indifferent audience. Khojeh Muhummud examined constantly the Cashmere shawl, and began to hint at the possibility, of his accompanying me to Heraut. Difficult and inconvenient as this might be, I could not prudently damp any hope, offering security to myself and people. I bade Ali Muhummud whisper to the other Yuze Baushee, Kooch Muhummud, that I had heard of his kindness to one of my suite, lately in slavery. That kindness to them, was in a ten-fold degree, kindness to myself, and should never be forgotten. I told him, that Saleh Muhummud had orders from me, to give him thirty ducats on reaching Khiva. That I expected him to stand by me, in case of treachery on the part of Hussun Mhatoor, and that I could promise him, in return, the gratification of his most extravagant hopes. He replied, that all was right, and that he was, heart and soul, in my interest. This man, in spite of his bearish manners, had something about him of rude honesty, which I was disposed to trust; although, well aware of the fallacy of physionomical impressions in a country, where the moral

degradation of all classes, is never to be wholly resisted, by the happiest natural dispositions.

During the whole of that day, articles of my property were brought back, generally in a ruined condition. The horses, especially, had become mere anatomies, and I plainly perceived, that they could never drag the weight of their own bones a fourth part of the distance, severing us from Khiva, and that fresh horses or camels would be indispensable. This was no longer a formidable difficulty, for Saleh Muhummud, although he kept profoundly secret the possession of a sum of money for me, yet had no fear in declaring, that he was provided with sufficient for my expenses to Khiva. The sabres were all more or less damaged. I pointed out one of them, of a serpentine figure, to Cherkush Bae. Oh! he replied, that is easily remedied; and forthwith commenced straightening it, on his knee. The money was brought in much more reluctantly, in mighty small quantities: but this was now of no vital consequence. One of the brigands, the youth who had apparelled himself in my uniform, and played a very distinguished part in the triumph over us, was led up to me between two Toorcumuns, who were lashing him with their heavy whips, to make him yield up his portion of plundered gold. Khojeh Muhummud finding every effort for this purpose vain, prepared to make an example of him; and drawing his dagger, whilst the Toorcumuns pinioned him, was about to plunge it into his throat, when I threw myself between them, and commanded Khojeh to desist, saying, that if he desired my favour, he must prevent injury being done the Kuzzauks, on my account, for that I had pardoned them; that an Englishman had but one God, and one word; and that my honour was now concerned, in preventing injury to the pardoned.

Khojeh Muhummud slowly and reluctantly sheathed

his dagger. "If," he said, "you interfere in this way, we shall never be able to collect your property. Until one or two of these rascals is slaughtered, the others will not give up the gold. Inshallah! when the Khaun Huzurut hears what has happened, he will order a Chuppao (foray) upon the Kuzzauks, and we will carry the head of every Kawfur, concerned in the assault, upon a spear-point, to Khiva."

I explained to him, that it was of more importance in the eyes of the British, that the word of their agents should be inviolate, than that they should recover, by its forfeiture, a few miserable pieces of gold. And that I should really regard as the enemy of my honour, any who molested the Kuzzauks on my account. Excepting always the guides, who had betrayed us.

At Hussun Mhatoor's request, I furnished a list, in Toorkish, of the missing articles, such at least as could be remembered: omitting carefully all that were in Ahris' and Cherkush's possession. It was very evident, that whatever property I should leave unclaimed, would fall into the hands of Hussun Mhatoor: my agreement, therefore, with Ahris was for the present null and void: but I determined, that it should be virtually, if not actually fulfilled, on my arrival at Khiva; when the Khaun Huzurut's protection could be secured, to the two brothers. I explained this to them, and they perceived that I was without the means, at the moment, of securing to them even the property they possessed. They continued with me, Cherkush still dressing my wound, which had a very ugly appearance, and gave me no hope of saving the half severed finger. Other persons, who pretended skill in surgery, were brought for my service, but I would suffer none but Cherkush to touch it, meaning to make this an excuse for conveying him to Khiva, and rewarding him there. Both brothers were much out of spirits, and in

evident dread that Hussun Mhatoor would visit upon them, the kindness they had shewn me. It was now my constant care to comfort and shew them attention. The tables had been strangely reversed; yet although I once more held up my head, and was treated with marked respect, my real power was a shadow, and I was in reality a prisoner in the hands of the traitor Hussun.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Route to Dahsh Gullah—Its Difficulties—The Favourite of Hope—Resolution to pursue that Route—Choice of my Suite—Quarrel and Affray between the Toorcumuns and Oozbegs—Pacified by Saleh Muhummud—Forced Reconciliation—Mooraud Ali leaves me to my Fate—Khojeh Muhummud—Atonement of his Father's Crime.

UP to this moment, I had steadfastly adhered to my first proposition of return to Khiva. I had not given any one the slightest reason to think I could be persuaded to change my apparent purpose. But my heart was travelling in the other direction, and I waited only the appearance of a possibility, to determine my steps towards Dahsh Gullah. The difficulty of this route seemed increased tenfold, by the loss of Mooraud Ali's protection. There lay, between the inhabited steppe of the Mungh Kishlauk district, and the Russian fort, about forty miles of stepppe, utterly destitute of inhabitants; and although the undoubted property of the Khaun, and time out of mind, an integral portion of Khaurism, yet under the fear of the Russians, since their erection of a fort in the Khaun's territory. The Kuzzauks, indeed, are less in fear of the Russians, of the garrison, whose interest it is to encourage them to dwell in the neighbourhood, and from whom they purchase in exchange for sheep and hides, all the few luxuries and conveniences they are acquainted with; than they are in dread of the Chowdhoor Toorcumuns, who make such dealings a pretence for plundering

them. Nevertheless, the steppe is utterly abandoned, and he, who enters it, has taken leave of Khaurism, and is supposed to be within the power and influence of Russia. Whatever, therefore, should befall me, in that portion of the wilderness, neither Hussun Mhatoor, nor the Kuzzauks could well be called to account for. And, as both had weighty reasons of interest and of fear to prevent my arrival at Dahsh Gullah, it seemed extremely improbable, that they should ever suffer me to pass this waste territory in safety. For my own share of the peril, I had no thought. But my people had become dear to me, by our peculiar position. They had already suffered much on account of a government which had no claim upon their services. They were pining for a return, and in terror of a farther advance. It required nerve almost greater than I possessed, to place them in fresh and extreme peril. If I should depart without them, they might, in the event of my safe journey, return to Khiva. But should I perish, they would certainly be sold into captivity, or murdered. These considerations weighed most painfully upon my mind, and allowed me neither rest nor peace.

Saleh Muhummud perceived my constant heaviness of spirit, and entreated to share my confidence. I laid before him the cause of my anxiety. The necessity, stronger than death, urging me to complete my mission, however fruitless it might prove; and my perplexity on account of my people. He took, as usual, the bright and hopeful view of the question; he argued and assured, and although the arguments were nothing in themselves, they assumed force on the lips of this favourite of hope. They gave me, what I sought at that moment, the plea for considering my onward course, not utterly irrational. As for the servants, he would conduct them back to Heraut in safety. There was no cause of apprehension for them. He would himself see me safe to Dahsh Gullah, and then return. No one, now, would

dare to molest us. I had seen how little the Khaun Huzurut's authority was worth in these parts; and as that authority was probably much weakened by the advance of the Russian invasion, I could not allow the justness of his confidence, although delighted with it. Hope is a contagious sentiment, and I was strongly inoculated.

I wished, however, first to learn all that could be learned of the question; and summoning Summud Khaun, asked him what he thought of the route to Dahsh Gullah. He replied, "You are master, Sir; but I overheard a Kuzzauk say, that an army of Russians was encamped at Dahsh Gullah. It is, therefore, impossible that Hussun should venture within sight of that fort. The route to Khiva is the only one that affords a hope of safety."

"Such being your view of the case, Summud Khaun, I entreat you, and the rest of my servants, to return with Saleh Muhummud to Khiva and Heraut, for I am bent upon fulfilling my mission."

"No, Sir," replied Summud Khaun, "I will follow you at any risk. I made a solemn resolution to this effect on leaving Heraut, and I will not shrink from it. But it is rank madness to attempt the onward route. I have often heard Ahris and Cherkush say, that neither the Kuzzauks nor others would ever suffer them to take you to the Russian fort; and the arrival there of an army renders it doubly hopeless. I give you solemn warning, Sir, that you have but one path of hope, and that is, the return to Khiva; all others are desperate. You remember I warned you not to trust Dana Bae to guide you to Dahsh Gullah. Had you taken my advice, we might still be safe."

"Had I taken your advice, we should either have starved at Mung Kishlauk, or have been murdered there by Hussun Mhatoor. The case was desperate, and the path of my duty lay onward. Were it again to choose, I should do as I have done; but so far from desiring my servants to accompany me, I shall be

infinitely obliged to them to leave me, for they cannot aid me, but may add to my sufferings. Therefore call them together, and state the case fairly to them. There is little danger perhaps, though much toil, by the direct route through Khiva. On the other route, the toil will be trifling, but there is a space of imminent danger, the interval between parting with our escort and our arrival at Dahsh Gullah. The country there is utterly without witness of any deed done in it. The Toorcumuns, therefore, may send a party to feign themselves Russian subjects, and to fall upon us; or they may give intimation to the Russian Kuzzauks, who will be glad enough to slay and plunder us. Whatever befalls us there, Russia will bear the blame. If, however, we reach Dahsh Gullah, the Russians will certainly treat us kindly. We there embark for Astrakhan, where I ship my servants for Astrabad. At Astrabad, they join a caravan to Meshed; and at Meshed, they are only eleven marches from Heraut. If, knowing the risk, they prefer this plan, well and good; but I had much rather they followed the other."

Summud Khaun did as I desired, and the next day informed me of the result. All, he said, with one accord, preferred sharing my fate, whatever it might be. I called them before me, and reasoned with them; said that I would accept no hasty resolution, but hoped they would believe my assurance, that I had at heart their return to Khiva, and should feel infinitely relieved, if they preferred quitting me here. I then asked each in turn. Summud Khaun replied, as before, that he would share my fate, whatever it might be. The Meerza thought the Dahsh Gullah route the only one recommended by reason. Poor creature! I believe he never could have reached Khiva, so prostrated was his strength from the injury of his brain. Ali Muhummud declared that, in purchasing the freedom of his child, I had purchased him, soul and body. I would not hear of this. The child's ransom had cost me nothing, and Ali's presence could be of no

use to me. He persisted, however, and all the rest declared they had already determined that, if we were to suffer, it should be together. Nizaum, I thought, shewed some reluctance. He spoke of his mother, and I strongly insisted upon his return to her; but he was, perhaps, ashamed to be the only defaulter, and joined the general resolution.

I then ascertained what each wished done at Heraut, etc. on Saleh Muhummud's return with regard to his family, and dictated to Saleh accordingly. Ali Muhummud, whose wife was a slave that had been forced upon him, wished a little pocket money to be given to his child privately, without the mother's knowleege, who, he said, would seize it for herself. I bade Saleh give the boy five gold tillas. Khojeh Muhummud, who was present, was very much struck with this; and Saleh Muhummud begged him to remark that this was no solitary instance of our liberality; that whilst others, even in their gifts, defeated the intention by their unhandsome and niggardly spirit, the English always did the thing handsomely, or not at all. I did not intend the act to be political, but it proved of consequence to our interest, by shewing my disposition to remember, and my power still to reward, faithful service.

That day the controversy between Hussun Mhatoor and Mooraud Ali was renewed with fresh violence; and, in answer to some insinuation of the former, Mooraud Ali called him an infamous old scoundrel. Khojeh Muhummud, Hussun's son, resented this warmly, rose, seized a stick, and attempted to reach Mooraud Ali, but was held back by the sturdy Yuze Baushee, Kooch Muhummud, who threw his arms around him. Words, however, waxed high, swords were drawn, and blows exchanged. The confusion spread throughout the camp, and it seemed very probable that, however the combatants might fare, I and my party would be provided for in the melée, as an easy settlement of all controversy. I endeavoured to

keep my people apart from the affray, but Saleh Muhummud's mercurial temperament would not suffer him long to be still. He rushed upon Kojeh Muhummud, who was bearing down upon Mooraud Ali with a drawn sword, and, winding his arms around him, withheld him from his purpose by expostulations and by force. This probably saved Mooraud Ali's life, who was unarmed and ill supported; but it did not prevent a youth of fourteen years, brother-in-law of Khojeh, from reaching Mooraud Ali with a naked sabre, and aiming several blows at his head. Our shouts warned Mooraud Ali in time. He turned, avoided the first blow, and closing with his antagonist, prevented the remaining blows from taking effect, and, in spite of the struggles of the youth, wrenched the sword out of his grasp. The other combatants were restrained in a similar manner, and no serious wounds were received. Whilst Saleh Muhummud was wrestling with Khojeh, I felt great uneasiness, lest his belts of gold should make themselves known to the latter, which might have cost all our lives.

Saleh Muhummud, entering Mooraud's Ali's tent, reasoned with him long and earnestly; at length persuaded him to come over to my tent, entreating him there to be reconciled to Hussun Mhatoor. "I had rather drink his blood," he replied; "but if my guest," turning to me, "insists upon it, I will obey, as in duty bound. He has insulted me beyond forgiveness, but a guest is entitled to command in all things."

My situation was embarrassing; I had no right to abuse his hospitality, by forcing him to forgive a deadly insult; at the same time, he being so much the weaker party, I feared he might be massacred during the night, unless some reconciliation were effected. I therefore led Mooraud Ali by the hand to Hussun Mhatoor, and insisted that both should embrace, in token of reconciliation. They did so, but, as their faces met, Hussun muttered Kawfur (infidel), and when their persons sundered, it was evident that the

enmity was irreconcileable. Saleh in fact had carried his interference too far. Such forced reconciliations but inflame the wounds of enmity.

The commotion just recorded, had naturally delayed the appearance of dinner, and night fell ere any symptoms of that necessary ceremony were displayed. Whilst sitting in my tent, pondering my perplexed and unhappy position, I heard a fresh uproar outside, and sent to inquire its cause. I was informed, that the Toorcumuns had prepared, or were preparing me a feast, and that they were driving away from my tent some of Mooraud Ali's servants, who wished to bring me dinner from the Oozbeg's kitchen; insisting that I was their guest, and not his. This was most embarrassing: for should I refuse to be the guest of the Toorcumuns, Mooraud Ali could not protect me from their resentment. And should I yield to them, I should give Mooraud Ali a plea, which I believed he would think welcome, for washing his hands of my concerns.

In this extremity, I sent for Khojeh Muhummud, and explained to him my position, saying, that I could not in honour be the guest of any but him, whose roof sheltered me. That I must continue with Mooraud Ali that night, at least, and would enter *his* tent the ensuing day. After much opposition, he agreed to this arrangement, and Mooraud Ali soon after appeared, bringing me dinner. Kooch Muhummud happened, just then, to be sitting in my little circle, and I persuaded him to partake with us, of the fare. Two hours afterwards, to my great annoyance, Khojeh Muhummud brought, with his own hand, another dinner, and insisted upon our eating of that also. To tell the truth, our stomachs were in that bustling humour, that they thought not much of such an exploit, and ate with abundant relish the second meal, and were quite ready for a third, an hour after it was discussed. But I feared this incident would be seized by Mooraud Ali, as an excuse for entirely

forsaking me;" a disposition that was sufficiently evident, induced by fear of the formidable power of Hussun Mhatoor.

In the morning, I removed my few articles of dress from Mooraud Ali's tent, to the tent of the Toorcumuns; and seeing that Mooraud was striking his tent for a move, went to take leave of him. We embraced, and I thanked him most warmly for his handsome and hospitable conduct, assuring him that he had made me his debtor for ever.

"He replied, "I would willingly guard you through all your difficulties, but Hussun Mhatoor is too strong for me, here, backed by his Toorcumuns, whilst my people are far away. I must leave you, and he can do with you as he pleases. I shall now hasten back to the Khaun Huzurut, and lay matters before him; for it is impossible that Hussun Mhatoor and myself should live upon the same earth."

"You promissed that your son should accompany me. Are you prepared to make this arrangement? He would be of the greatest service, for they would not dare act treacherously whilst he was in company."

"I dare not trust my son with them; you have seen yesterday to what lengths they will go. There were no safety for him, in their company."

We parted, and I never again saw him: but the remembrance of his kindness will ever be fresh in my heart; and should it be my lot to cross his path, I shall lose no opportunity of thanking and honouring him. The motives of Asiatics will rarely bear scrutiny. It is better, sometimes, to be contented with the deed, without rigidly investigating the cause. I believe, however, that Mooraud Ali's conduct to me, was greatly dictated by that fine, hospitable pride, which, if it has ever existed more extensively, has almost perished from Khaurism; and more than this I will not inquire.

The remainder of this day, and the whole of that

which ensued, were spent in the tent of Khojeh Muhummud, who served me with his own hand, but whom I always persuaded to eat from the same dish with me. The circumstances under which I was placed, as the guardian of the lives and liberties of my people, rendered it a sacred obligation on my part, to neglect no means of their safety. I felt, also, deep sympathy for Khojeh Muhummud, the honourable son of so infamous a father. I scrupled not to accept his overtures of brotherhood, respectfully, but affectionately urged upon me; and for his sake, blotted from my heart the vengeance recorded there, for the villany of Hussun Mhatoor.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Departure for Dahsh Gullah—Hussain prigs my best Horse—Saleh Muhummud—Summud Khaun's View of Things—Restoration of Property—Its Condition—Metamorphoses—Singular Good Luck of a Table Cloth—Zone of a Shepherdess—Transfer of Gold—Pardon of the Kuzzauks—Hussun fails in the Number of Escort promised—Route continued—Last Tent in the Wilderness—Bivouac—Expectation of our Massacre—A sweet Argument—A Night of Anxiety—My Guides leave me in the Wilderness—Melancholy Position—Parting Charge of Saleh Muhummud—Hour of Suspense—First View of Dahsh Gullah.

THE next day, at about eleven o'clock, I perceived arrangements in progress for a move. The weather was very gloomy, and my feelings accorded. We rode to water our horses, at the neighbouring brackish wells, and then proceeded. I was mounted upon my own horse, which had been recovered from Yar Muhummud. He was not such a mere skeleton as the others, for Yar Muhummud being a man of wealth, had assigned him a daily allowance of milk, in addition to the scanty pasture of the steppe, upon which the rest of the horses had depended. Nizaum's beautiful Toorcumun had been returned: but Hussun Mhatoor had set his eye upon it, and it was carried off by one of his emissaries, during the night. The rest of my people were variously mounted upon camels, Kuzzauk geldings, and our own steeds. We cut a shabby figure, having barely sufficient clothes for decency, and those the oldest and the worst.

Hussun Mhatoor, in quality of guide, rode in front, closely attended by several Kuzzauk chiefs, one of whom was father to one of my assailants. In a hollow

of the steppe we came upon about fifty more, but for what purpose collected I could not learn. Many of them joined our party, staring hard at me. Kooch Muhummud rode once or twice near me. I wished to sound him, but the negligence of my interpreter baffled all my attempts. Khojeh Muhummud was not present. Saleh rode always close in rear of me. Being handsomely mounted and equipped, his deference for me, which he never forgot, but which one or two of my suite remembered only when I commanded them, was of great consequence to me at that eventful hour. I constantly called Saleh to my side, that he might impart to a mind, almost worn out by suffering, anxiety, and watching, the hopeful rays of his young and sanguine spirit. The presence of this young man was an inestimable blessing to me. Hussun Mhatoor treated me with marked respect; but mingled with it might be seen symptoms of a sense of his absolute power over my life and fortunes. I was obliged, in return, to treat him with civility, for more than my own life was at stake in the question; and, indeed, having been compelled by circumstances to grant him forgiveness, I made it my business to quench the fire of vengeance, whenever it shewed itself in my heart.

We crossed the salt marsh by a better ford, a little farther North. This marsh, and the cliffs which and the cliffs which bound it, I have already described. I had passed them full of doubts, which the succeeding hour had dissipated, and I now argued of the future from the past. Yet I confess, I hated the sight of these cliffs, which had so long hemmed me in; crossed and re-crossed, yet still growing up to heaven around me; still, like the folds of Styx, seeming to shackle me from commerce with that world, in which alone there was life for me. To encourage my rose-coloured fancies, I overheard Summud Khaun holding forth, in his consequential voice, to my other followers—

"The Sahib is mad, infatuated, clean daft. Heaven has been at the trouble of delivering us, once, from the hands of these cannibals, and we are walking again into their very jaws. Well! it's our fate. But how often heaven will be pleased to interfere, I cannot conjecture. I've done my duty, that's one comfort. I warned him once at Mungh Kishlauk, not to proceed to Dahsh Gullah with that imp of Satan, Dana Bae, and I have again warned him not to attempt it now. But he is infatuated. When heaven blinds a man, he cannot see. It's our destiny, that's what it is. Had we returned to Khiva, we should have ridden in triumph, every man's son of us. But by this route Hussun Mhatoor will not, and could not if he would, carry us in safety."

I heard this with a strong mixture of mirth and uneasiness, and seized an early opportunity of cross-examining the preacher.

"Well, Summud Khaun, what think you of our journey?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "It's our fate, Sir; and we must fulfil our destiny."

"But have you any fresh cause for alarm?"

He shrugged his shoulders, and was silent.

I called Ali Muhummud, and bade him keep constantly at my elbow; for as he was my sole means of intercourse with the Toorcumuns, whom I desired to gain to my side, it was of consequence that he should be in readiness, to snatch opportunities as they occurred. This order, however, repeated and reiterated, was but imperfectly obeyed, owing to causes already detailed. The Meerza was now quite childish, and dependent upon Ali for everything; and the habit of obedience had so grown upon Ali's good nature, that he *could* not refuse attention to the whims and orders of the Meerza and of Summud Khaun.

After ascending the chalk cliffs, by a steep and broken path, we struck over the high plain in the direction of my former place of captivity, i.e. to the

Southern point of the inlet Kara Soo. I found that the object of this move was to take up a bivouac, favourable to the collection of the stolen goods. At evening we encamped on the brink of the cliffs, my old prison walls; and here again fragments of my property were brought in by slow and reluctant degrees. I insisted upon the necessity of recovering a suit of regimentals, as without them the Russians might refuse to believe me a British officer. These were brought me in atoms, the embroidery having been cut off, and the buttons melted down, under the supposition that they were gold. Hussun asked me what they were worth, in order that he might have excuse for plundering the Kuzzauks; and could scarcely be made believe they had been only copper gilt. A Kuzzauk shepherdess was sent for; some coarse string and a small knife were placed in her hands, and by means of this needle and thread she contrived to tack together the full-dress coat of a Captain of the Indian army.

Hussun Mhatoor sat at my side, watching every article, as it was brought in and delivered to me, with blood-red eyes. When the Cashmere shawl, which had so narrowly escaped an unmentionable fate, reappeared, he clutched it in both his hands, as if he could, by the intense energy of his avarice, have changed the relative value of the pronouns *meum* and *tuum*. I whispered to Saleh Muhummud, with a glance at the shawl, "Lost, lost;" and I was persuaded that he never would have the courage to relinquish the grasp, which continued glued to it until he fell asleep. The fate of several of the articles excited our mirth. The chintz table cloth, upon which my dinner had been spread daily during the last two months, had become a pair of female inexpressibles, bluff in the bows and mighty in the beam. We held them up to the light to consider them at leisure. We pondered the delicate dimensions of the Kuzzauk shepherdess. That rag had had its share of the good

things of the earth, the shrine alternately of conviviality and of beauty. It was no easy matter to shape for it a future equal to the past. To fill up the full measure of its capacity was manifestly impossible. The least I can do is to make a banner of it, to be carried by the rampant unicorn who prances above the shield of my fathers.

My military cloak, spoiled of its plaid lining, had made an entire wardrobe for another fair thing. My white muslin turbans had, of course, been cut into a variety of articles, the exact application and office of which were above the comprehension of any but a Kuzzauk lady's milliner; cotton socks made admirable purses; and a black silk stock, with an extra strap of half-tanned horse-skin, figured away as zone to the sheep-skin mantle of a Kuzzauk shepherdess. The state of my arms, etc., has already been described. Whenever any article of greater utility than ordinary appeared, I said to it with a bow, "Khoosh Aumudeed" (you are welcome). Nothing had so much astonished the Kuzzauks and Toorcumuns as my indifference to the disposal of property, which in their eyes was as the wealth of Jumsheed. Articles of price and utility, sometimes endeared by old associations, were cut to pieces before my eyes, without exciting the slightest emotion.

Hussun Mhatoor began now to talk about the Toorcumun horse which he had stolen. He said that search had been made far and near, but no tidings could be learned of it. What was he to do with it, should it ever be recovered? I replied that he would, of course, send it for me to Khiva.

He said that a long space must elapse ere it could be fit for such a trip, and in fact intimated his wish that I could give it him. It was his by nine-tenths of the law, and this was no season for irritating him; I therefore replied that, on receipt of my letter from Dahsh Gullah, reporting safe arrival, the horse was his: in default of this, it remained mine, as before. I

was glad to recover the blade of the beautiful little dagger which I had used the night of the attack, for it now had a history of its own. I had purchased it for ten guineas from one of the royal family of Heraut; it was fashioned and worked as only the first sword-cutlers of Persia can make such weapons. The massive handle of hippopotamus tooth had been shattered by the blow, which half severed my hand. Fortunately, it had one of those bayonet points which are used for forcing the links of chain armour; it therefore did not penetrate so far as might have been expected. My arm also was probably weak from the number of blows my head and body had sustained. Had it been furnished with a double edge, nothing could have saved the Kuzzauk who felt it.

I endeavoured, by every argument in my power, to hasten our onward progress, begging that the property, if collected, might be collected after my departure. But I found Hussun as obstinate as ever, and was detained in this spot two days. I believe I have omitted to mention that the announcemeht to Hussun of my determination to proceed to Dahsh Gullah instead of returning to Khiva, was received by him with the greatest possible satisfaction, and that he readily promised me a guard of himself, his son, and a hundred Toorcumun horse to within sight of the fort. Khojeh Muhummud added that, if I liked, he would accompany me within the walls; but this I, of course, objected to, bargaining only that he should bring me within sight of the place, and watch my movements until I should approach within protection of the walls, for neither myself nor any of my suite were in a condition to resist the least formidable of onsets.

As this was now the last night I was to enjoy the shelter of a tent, I awakened Saleh Muhummud at midnight, and bade him make over to me the gold, which he still wore around his waist. This was an operation of extreme delicacy. The chink of one piece against another would have been the death-knell

of the whole party. With infinite difficulty, owing to the inflamed state of my hand, I contrived to extract two handfuls of gold, which I returned to Saleh, for his expenses to Heraut, and for the fulfilment of one or two commissions which I had given him. He was anxious to count out the money in due form, but this was not to be thought of for an instant. I then secured the leathern belt around my waist, next my skin, where the buckle and strap continued, for weeks afterwards, cutting their way into my flesh, and raising painful blisters. The second day I wore it, indeed, the pain was so great that I was obliged for awhile to dismount, and lie on the ground on the plea of sickness; and several times my secret was almost discovered, as some officious Toorcumun chief caught me in his arms on dismounting, or insisted upon lifting me into my saddle.

Hitherto Cherkush and Ahris had been constantly in attendance, and their presence was always some comfort, because I believed the former to be sincerely attached to me, and that the interests of Ahris were separate from those of the Toorcumuns. I exerted my influence amongst the latter race in behalf of the brothers; assuring the Yuze Baushees that I should regard any one as my friend who should protect them, and should look upon any injury they might receive as an unpardonable insult. I also declared once more, that I forgave all the Kuzzauks who had injured me, excepting always Dana Bae and his son, for whom I had nothing to say; that I should not, indeed, myself prosecute them as they deserved, partly because they were beneath my anger, partly on account of the misery which their innocent children would suffer from their destruction; but that I regarded in so heinous a light the crime they had committed against the most sacred of human laws, that I should not interfere with the just vengeance of the Khaun Huzurut upon them. I have never learned the fate of these

men. They were probably screened by Hussun Mhatoor, who first incited them to their treachery.

The day that we quitted this spot to proceed to Dahsh Gullah was naturally fraught with anxiety. Missing Cherkush Bae, I was informed that he had gone to bring us a skin of curdled milk, an excuse so frivolous that it caused me some anxiety. In spite of all our precautions, the two brothers were obliged to render up all their share of the plunder. I offered to restore it them at once; but they objected, saying, it would be impossible for them to keep it from the search of Hussun Mhatoor and his Toorcumuns, who had entered the brothers' tent during their absence, and, after seizing all they could find, had frightened the women and children into an acknowledgment of all that was concealed. All therefore I could do, was to beg Saleh Muhummud to pay them the value of what they had lost, when he should reach Khiva.

When on starting I perceived the smallness of my escort, which amounted to about a dozen Toorcumuns and five or six Kuzzauks, I enquired of Hussun where my hundred Toorcumun horsemen were, and whether, with so many enemies as his injustice had made him, and my misfortunes had procured *me* amongst the Kuzzauks of those parts,—not to mention the hostility of the Russian Kuzzauks, whose haunts we were approaching,—he was about to separate himself from all support of his tribe, backed by a dozen guards. He replied that he could not collect a larger number of Toorcumuns at present; that Kuzzauk guards would be more likely to turn upon us than to help us, and that he would proceed warily. I was disgusted with this conduct, principally on account of its evidence of a disposition to break covenant with me. I confess I thought the Kuzzauks, whom he had been plundering and maltreating for his own crime, would be great fools if they neglected this opportunity of cutting him off, either by an ambush of their own, or by sending intelligence of his motions to the Russian garrison.

We put up that night at a Kuzzauk tent, out of which the luckless owners were driven for our accommodation; being then obliged to kill a sheep for our entertainment. I contrived, however, to reward them secretly. I was always placed close to Hussun Mhatoor, as he was the greatest man of my retinue. The proximity was not gratifying, as may readily be supposed. I knew him capable of the blackest treachery; and though it was not possible that I should prevent it, I was day and night on my guard to punish it. I had that feeling of indignation at his villany, that I should have forgotten the pang of death in avenging myself upon him. I determined that I would not fall alone, but drag him with me to death. With this view I always took up my position, keeping my only hand free, to grasp the dagger in case of necessity.

This was the last human habitation, and we were still distant from Dahsh Gullah about forty-five miles, which were to be made during the ensuing day and night. All night Hussun was awake, talking earnestly with Kuzzauks and Toorcumuns, who entered from time to time. Kooch Muhummud brought me some Toorcumun cheese, being small masses of pressed curd, discoloured by the whey, in which it is allowed to lie. It was very delicious to my palate; but for some time I imagined I was eating the flesh of fowls. Saleh Muhummud had recovered some loaf sugar from his camel stores, and was constantly feeding me with it. I had entered my second childhood, and was as much pleased as an infant without teeth at the bits of hard biscuit and loaf sugar which, by an impartial division of good things, fell to my lot.

In the morning, we again started, and found the country, as before, a high steppe covered with wormwood, which being here unbrowsed, is much more plentiful than elsewhere. The party scattered over the country, to take the better survey of the land. At night, we sat down for a few hours, and afterwards resumed the march; halting at midnight within

about fifteen miles of Dahsh Gullah, and by the side of a well of the purest water, a rare thing in the steppe. And here Hussun Mhatoor declared that he dared proceed no further. That he should halt here, and send his son with me. Here was an old ruffian, about sixty-five years of age, deliberately shielding his miserable remnant of existence, beneath the life of his eldest son.

We sat down to refresh ourselves, and I heard Summud Khaun expressing his conviction, that here they would fall upon and murder us; an opinion not very different from my own. For Russia would have borne the whole blame of whatever befell us there. I ordered my people to take advantage of the confusion of such an attack, and flee in the darkness, without staying the one for the other. Dahsh Gullah seemed their better hope of refuge. Having no map of the country, I was bewildered at the course we had all this night pursued, which was due North, whereas, heretofore the journey had been nearly due East. I could not imagine how we had proceeded so far North, without reaching the waters of the Caspian. I slipped into the hands of the Yuze Baushees little notes, being orders for small presents to them; good, only in the event of my safe arrival.

Nizaum had been very sulky the day before, and I fancied he wished an excuse for returning to Heraut. I had, therefore, insisted upon his not following me farther, but returning with Saleh Muhummud. His conduct had vexed me, for he had been lying at his ease, on pretence of a head-ache, whilst the Toorcumun Yuze Banshees were pitching my tent. I now gave him my last instructions, and my hand falling upon a lump of sugar, which Saleh had slipped by stealth into my pocket, I divided it with him. This little incident touched the strange being more than all the care I had bestowed upon him and his fortunes. He got up, and swore that he would never forsake me, and entreated me so earnestly to allow

him to accompany me, that at length, I was obliged to consent.

I now changed my eastern attire for a military uniform. Hussun Mhatoor came to bid me farewell, and insisted upon embracing me. It was no time to insult the old traitor, so I complied. He commended me solemnly to the care of God, and under these evil auspices, I departed. We continued to proceed due North, in complete silence, and again pulled up. Again there was a pause; and, to our minds, every thing appeared suspicious. The giant, Ahris Mhatoor, kept close to Nizaum and Maimood, wielding, as if it had been a rod, a huge Russian hatchet. I say wielding. For this man was never an instant at rest; and the hatchet, which another man would have carried at his belt, was flourished constantly in his hand. His countenance, always hideous, was now under an excitement, of which I knew not the nature. We sat upon the wet earth, whilst our unlucky horses browsed upon the wormwood; and after half an hour, during which messengers came and went, speaking always in whispers, we remounted, and proceeded in dead silence: for it was supposed we were near the fort. An hour, however, passed, and morning at length dawned upon a night that seemed interminable. A night of anxiety, which it is difficult even to shadow upon any imagination. It is true, that the end could not have been much more than death, and for that I had been hourly prepared; but we were dallying with it blindfold. Playing with its fiery darts. Sipping its venom; expecting, sometimes almost hoping for it: always disappointed.

The near prospect now afforded of accomplishing my mission, however fruitless delay might have rendered it, had buoyed me up with a certain miserable hope, or rather desire to live. Some accident might have detained the Russian army. Things the most improbable had befallen me, as if to teach me that

human probability was subject to a decree, which the mind of man grasps at in vain.

When the morning had fully broken, a wide desert plain stretched around us, precisely similar to that which had accompanied us for about seven hundred miles. My guides, Khojeh and Kooch Muhummud, rode up to a cairn of stones, and dismounted, saying that the fort was in sight, and that they dared not accompany me farther. The Kuzzauk guard put this resolve into immediate effect, by riding back toward the region we had left. I desired to be shewn the fort; they pointed towards the horizon on the North, but there, nothing was visible, excepting the irregular grey line of the steppe meeting the monotonous grey of the cold morning sky. We strained our eyes in vain, until they seemed bursting from their sockets. Had they said, "The fort is in that direction, but we cannot see it at this distance"; I could have believed them. Here, then, we were to be abandoned, without guide, chart, or compass, in a land where every living thing was athirst for our blood. The sea on one side, the desert on the other. Our cattle dropping from fatigue, ourselves and they unsupplied with sustenance for a single day. I remonstrated against the cruelty of this conduct. I reminded our guides of their solemn covenant, to bring me within sight of Dahsh Gullah. They said, indeed, it was in sight, but neither myself nor any of my suite could see it. Should they have mistaken their bearings, we were lost. The very first horsemen we met, would be too glad of an excuse to slay and plunder us, and we were no longer capable of even a shew of resistance. I urged them, by every sacred consideration, to deal faithfully with me. I reminded Khojeh that he was once for accompanying me within the very circle of the walls.

All remonstrances were vain. They swore solemnly that we were in sight of the fort, and that they dared

proceed no farther. I, therefore, embraced Khojeh Muhummud, and took a farewell of all. Saleh Muhummud was the last. I took him apart. He wished to follow me, but I would not suffer it. He asked what were my views respecting the arch-villain, Hussun Mhatoor. I replied, that my word had been extorted by circumstances, but that it must be sacred. He must not suffer on my account. Tell the Khaun Huzurut this, and that all I ask for all I have suffered in his service, is, that he will cherish and protect Cherkush and Ahris, forgive Hussun, and not visit upon the innocent Kuzzauks the sins of that old traitor. Dana Bae and his son I leave to their fate, whatever it may be. I have nothing to say for, or to injure them.

We embraced, and parted. Ahris Mhatoor was standing irresolute. "Am I to accompany you?" he enquired. I begged him to do so; for, should we not be near the fort, we should need his guidance thither, or back to his own tents. He complied very reluctantly. A Toorcumun, named Khidr, also accompanied us. I was very reluctant to this man's company, but Hussun Mhatoor had insisted upon it, declaring that he could not trust any Kuzzauk to bear back my letter for the Khaun Huzurut, upon which Hussun's own safety depended. We urged our cattle to their utmost speed, a shambling walk. I myself, the Meerza, Summud Khaun, and Ali Muhummud were mounted upon horses and ponies, the rest of my suite upon camels. The Toorcumun and Ahris Mhatoor rode ponies. We formed, it may be believed, a wretched and ragged cavalcade. It was of consequence to traverse, at best speed, this neutral ground; where all alike would prove our foes, and none bear the blame. Yet we rode a full hour ere we saw the slightest indication of a fort, or other human habitation; and I was persuaded that half a dozen more hours would produce no better result. It was an hour of intense anxiety.

At length, from a rising ground, we caught the distant view of a line of works, which at first perplexed me; but which, as we drew nearer, I recognised as a line of defences, surmounted by the pent roofs of European houses. The sight afforded such relief as it were not easy to describe.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Cossaq Horsemen—Message of the Commandant—Halt within Cannon-shot of the Walls—Long Suspense—Reflections—Masterly Manœuvre of the Commandant—Enter Dahsh Gullah—Mr. Laymann—Weariness of Commandant—His Physiognomy—Offer to ransom Cherkush Bae's Son—The Mystery of Abomination—Apparition of the same—Hospitality of Russians—Amputation of my Finger—Nizaum's Sentiment thereon—Farewell of Commandant—Of Cherkush Bae—Last Effort in favour of Latter—Leave Nuovo Alexandrofski—Russian Priest—Embark.

WE had scarcely caught sight of Dahsh Gullah, the object of so many anxious hopes and fears; when, on the other side, we saw galloping down upon us, two Kuzzauk horsemen; and as they neared us, I perceived by the excellence of their horses and superiority of their equipment, that they must belong to the Russian garrison. We made as much way as possible whilst they approached: for there was no safety from such gentry, at a distance from the fort. When they had come within reach of a carabine, they unslung their rifles; and I made such of my people as were armed, stand upon their guard. Although we outnumbered them, I had seen enough of the prowess of my people, rather to hope they would let us alone. As for myself, having no spurs, and my right arm being in a sling, I could not urge my jaded horse to a walk without aid of my servants, and could, therefore, neither fight nor flee, had the latter suited my office. They placed themselves in our path; and, as I wore an European uniform, I halted my party, and was riding to meet them, when Ahris Mhatoor begged me to allow him to be spokesman; and, putting in motion his shaggy galloway, and brandishing his formidable

hatchet, met and saluted them. It was an anxious moment. The Cossaqs held their rifles in readiness, and, mounted as they were, might have galloped around us, and have picked us off man by man. And, although on foot, or equally mounted, neither would have stood an instant before the powerful axe and fiery courage of Ahris Mhatoor: yet their fire-arms placed him entirely at their mercy. The scene was full of romance. I could appreciate, though not enjoy it. Ahris, even in his present position, could not keep his person still. From his gestures, and the flourishes of his axe, any one might have supposed he was challenging the Cossaqs to fight. After some parley, he returned, and informed me that these horsemen belonged to the garrison, and had been sent out for intelligence. That my misfortunes were known at Dahsh Gullah, and that they would gallop on, and give news of my approach, which they accordingly did.

We therefore hastened our progress in the same direction, and saw, at every minute, the features of the still distant fort grow upon us, until all was intelligible and plain. When we had approached almost within cannon-shot of the defences, the horsemen again met us, and commanded us, in the name of the governor, to halt. We did so. I dismounted, and seated myself upon the plain. After the lapse of half an hour or more, two horsemen issued from the fort and approached us; the one in plain clothes, the other a dragoon. They halted an arrow's flight from my party, and beckoned to us. I therefore sent Ali Muhummud with a flag of truce, i. e., a white muslin turban spread upon a Cossaq spear: instructing him to say that I was a British officer from Heraut, who had business at St. Petersburg, and craved permission to shelter in the fort, and there embark for Astrakhan.

After a quarter of an hour's parley, the horsemen returned to the fort, and Ali to me. They had

questioned him strictly concerning me, and the state of the country we had left. He had delivered my message, and a letter in French, for the governor, scrawled with my left hand. They had desired us to wait farther advice. A long interval ensued, and then four horsemen issued from the gates and approached us. We parleyed as before, and they returned, giving us not a hope of admission. My thoughts were most melancholy, I seemed involved, with a vengeance, between the devil and the deep sea. Death, in a frightful shape behind me, and the doors of a christian and a civilized country shut in my teeth.

I did not know at the time, that the governor was employing this interval, to strengthen the posture of his garrison; and was loading and preparing all the guns of his fort, to blow me, should I prove desperate, over the great wall of China. One of the last horsemen, Ali pretended to recognize as an ambassador who had been sent from Russia to Khiva, to demand the surrender of Russian captives. He proved, afterwards, to be a confidential servant of the governor, who had been sent to me on account of his knowledge of the Toorkish tongue.

After another weary and melancholy interval, the four horsemen again approached. One, the confidential servant, aforesaid, whom, from his dress, and the lead he took in the business, I supposed must be some civil functionary; the second, an adjutant of a Cossaq regiment of the garrison. I addressed them alternately in French, English, Latin, Persian, and Hindustani: but they shook their heads in reply. They intimated however, through my interpreter, that I was at liberty to enter the fort; and I mounted accordingly and proceeded with them. At the gate of the fort, a black tent was shewn me, where my servants were to be accommodated; but I was told, that I myself might enter the fort. This was a masterly manœuvre, quite equal to any of Napoleon's

early exploits for weakening by dividing the enemy. Not having the slightest intention of storming the fort, hand in sling, with half a dozen wounded menials, I could not, of course, penetrate the motive; but rode in without scruple, and was ushered into a small wooden house, where I found Mr. Laymann, a German naturalist, the only one of the garrison acquainted with French, and like myself now called upon, for the first time in his life, to speak it. He received me kindly and hospitably. Informed me, that no ships sailed from that fort to Astrakhan, but that vessels were about to convey the relieved garrison to Gorief, at the mouth of the Oorahl river, whence he thought I had better proceed to Orenburg. In fact, he said, the Emperor had ordered all who might arrive from Khiva to be sent thither, so that he thought the governor would feel obliged to obey the mandate literally, in my case. My object in going to Astrakhan at this moment, was to place my servants on board a vessel bound to Astrabad. To carry them all with me to St. Petersburgh, was out of the question; and at Orenburgh, they would have no means of return to Heraut.

Mr. Laymann informed me, that the governor had been told to expect me at the head of 10,000 Toorcumuns; the number of that race who accompanied me to Mungh Kishlauk, having been multiplied by one thousand only. He described the hardships the Russian army of invasion had experienced, as almost incredible, and allowed, that they had lost much cattle by the intense cold. He did not inform me, perhaps was not aware, that the army had been recalled, owing to its disasters. The commander of the garrison, a captain in the Russian army, he described as an excellent man, and a brave and wary soldier. Of his wariness I cannot have a doubt, as it had nearly blown me to Pekin. I was not, however, aware at this time, what precautions had been taken, for the reception of a wounded stranger. Mr. Lay-

mann sent for the doctor to dress my hand, and I felt great relief from an operation, which invested the wound in clean dressings. He told me, that the middle finger must come off, and appointed the next day for the operation. After some farther conversation with my host, he took me through the fort, to the quarters assigned me. The sight of houses of European structure filled me with unutterable sensations of delight; which contrasted strangely with the very natural disgust of Mr. Laymann, at the horrors of a petty garrison on the confines of Tartary.

The commandant soon after called upon me. A stout, round-face, red-nosed, yellow-haired Russian; with a grey pig's eye, cunning to detect ambushments, epaulettes on his shoulders, and a thousand bows at the service of a friend. He apologised for the meanness of my quarters, and for the coarseness of the food he must offer me; assuring me, that each was the best he could command. He was scarcely seated, ere he left me in haste, I suppose to provide against some threatened invasion of my ten thousand Toorcumuns. The food he sent me seemed the most exquisite of dainties. In fact, the sturgeon is never to be despised, even by the epicure of civilized lands, and here it forms the staple provision. I was, however, a little bewildered by the contents of a bottle, labelled "Madeira of prime quality," and had a hearty laugh over the sour brew. It proved to be quass, the national drink; an acid tipple, made by fermenting water, in which coarse bread has been soaked. I never acquired the taste necessary to relish this, nor could conceive the use of spoiling so much good water and bad bread. I was served in silence, for not a creature could speak a word of any language familiar to me; and when Mr. Laymann was absent, I was utterly cut off from means of communicating with my fellow-creatures; if indeed, I could so term those who had nothing in common with me, but the

figure of bipeds. My quarters overlooked the line of works on the sea-side. It was delightful at length to gaze upon that sea, as a road, and not a tomb. The wind, blowing from the sea, forbade the idea of present departure. It continued thus, unless I have lost my dates, about eight days, to my infinite vexation.

When I found means of calling upon the commandant, my first object was to procure the release of Cherkush Bae's son, which I had already intimated to him, through Mr. Laymann. The answer was, that the young man had been taken in rebellion against the Russian Government, and that his release was impossible; and the spirited attack, made by the Toorcumuns upon the Russian boats and the custom-house, was spoken of as a heinous crime. I replied, that even if it were true, as I was certain it was not, that the youth had been engaged in that act of gallantry, he was only doing the duty of a good subject, in assailing his invaders. That prisoners of war were always subject to ransom. That I had heard he, the commandant, had placed a price of two hundred sheep upon the youth's head; that I would gladly pay this, or any sum not exceeding the contents of my purse, for his liberation. I had the fullest knowledge that his liberty *had* been offered at a certain price. The commandant declared the thing was impossible, and unheard of; that he must wait orders from Orenburgh, as to the disposal of this youth, and of others concerned in the late heinous rebellion. I urged, that to attack the invaders of one's country is no rebellion; that the youth in question had not even done this, being too young for such enterprises; that he had been delivered up to the garrison by the treachery of an enemy, when he had come to purchase flour; that to detain him was unjust, but to detain him when the price set upon his head was forthcoming was still worse. I was sure the commandant would let me pay this, and liberate the only

son of a man who had repeatedly saved my life. He seemed softened, and said he would consider of his release.

Poor Nizaum came to me at night, with a countenance of misery. "What animal is that, Sir," he enquired, "which I see in the fort?"

"Do you mean that, which has two epaulettes and a red nose?"

"No, Sir; it goes on four legs."

"A dog, I suppose."

"No, Sir; it is longer in the back, and thicker in the body."

I immediately conjectured what animal he alluded to, and begged him not to press me for an answer.

"It can't be the Unclean One, Sir."

"Say as little of it as possible, Nizaum. What do you think of its looks?"

"It is very horrible, Sir. What do the Russians do with it? What can be the use of it?"

"You must ask *them;* I am in their country for the first time."

The next morning poor Nizaum went to Summud Khaun, and said, "Summud Khaun, my mother's dead."

"Indeed; how do you know?"

"I saw a vision last night, a vision of evil omen, a horrible creature."

"What was it like?"

"It was the unclean beast. My poor mother *must* be dead."

"And her ghost has appeared to you."

Nizaum left Summud Khaun in great wrath, and some confusion.

I dined with the commandant. In spite of the limited nature of the supplies, the dinner was excellent, and the wines corresponded. Indeed, although the cost of Madeira and other foreign wines in Russia, and especially in the remote districts, is enormous, I found, at every house of any consideration, the very

best supplies, to which the guest is made more than welcome. I have observed the master of a house quite vexed, that my slender appetite and water-drinking habits, and still more my delight at finding myself once more in the company of the fair sex, prevented me from doing justice to his excellent cheer. I lost no opportunity of urging the release of Cherkush Bae's son; and the commandant promised, that after a while he should be set free, without ransom.

The position of this fort is singularly desolate. On one side, the Caspian, opening access to only two considerable ports of Russia, Durbund and Astrakhan, and those frontier towns; on the other side, a steppe, generally without inhabitant, and when inhabited, occupied only by dealers in human flesh—savages dressed in skins, the enemies of Russia. The garrison itself, of 300 men, affords, of course, scarcely any society; for the lower grades cannot afford to marry, and a captain is the highest there. It is only when a colonel in charge of a corps, that a Russian officer is provided with a reasonable income. The Cossaq officers there called upon me. Their manners were manly and quiet, courteous and good; but as we had no language in common, I could not explore their minds. The doctor of the lately-arrived detachment entered my quarters one evening imperially drunk, and would have dragged, when he could not persuade, me to walk over to his own house, to pass a merry evening. I shook him off with great difficulty. He could speak half a dozen words of French, of which he was very vain.

A morning had been appointed for removing my half-severed finger. I acquiesced in the wisdom of this; for it had been hanging on for a month, without any symptoms of uniting, or of the rest of the wound closing. The ends of the bone were just sufficiently in contact to rub together at every motion of the horse, and I had ridden in that state about 130 miles. The two doctors accordingly fixed the tourniquet, and

commenced the operation. I was prepared for much pain, owing to the exacerbation of a wound so long open, and so unfavourably treated; but I was not aware that the bone had become a bundle of most sensitive nerves, nor that the torture would threaten to burst every vessel of my brain. Still less, that it was to endure a mortal half hour. The doctor excused the delay by saying, that after the first slice he had found the bone so diseased, that extirpation was necessary. It may be supposed, that when the wound healed I was a little surprised to find the joint still complete, and that the extirpation had been either a misnomer or an excuse. An English surgeon would extirpate a finger in three minutes.

As soon as the doctors had left me, Nizaum brought me the finger, carefully swaddled in a handkerchief. "I thought, Sir," he said, in a sentimental tone, "you might like to have a last look at it."

I was still suffering considerable torture from the stump, which the sight of the finger did not by any means allay; but I could not help a disposition to mirth at poor Nizaum's sentiment. He handled the finger as if it had been a dead baby, and I its mother. I, however, took a farewell look of the faithful and useful companion of many years, and Nizaum carried it away. When he returned, I said, "I hope you didn't toss it out into the street?"

Nizaum was horrified. "O no, Sir; I have buried it, buried it deep." He had not words for the horrible thought, which had suggested this precaution; but his looks were all eloquent of the unclean beast, the long-backed mystery of abomination that haunted him day and night. "The other finger, Sir, I buried on the field of strife. I dug a deep hole for it with my knife."

I thought that not every servant, at such a moment of peril, would have thought of this affectionate precaution.

Eight miserable days I was detained by contrary

winds in this fort. The relieved garrison was then embarked, my people were sent aboard, and I was escorted also to the vessel. The commandant, however, first came to take leave. He begged I would attribute none of my own or my people's suffering to him as an individual; but that I would regard them as proceeding from a high sense of responsibility to his government. I reminded him of his promise to release Cherkush Bae's son, and set free also Cherkush and Ahris, whom he had imprisoned for no cause that I could imagine, excepting that they had saved a Christian's, and what was worse, a Briton's life. He affected not to know that they were confined, and then, to confound them with some prisoners charged with the late attack upon the Russian boats. I, however, pointed them out, and begged that Cherkush might attend me, as I had money to give him. He said that he hoped I would give it in presence of witnesses whom he would send, in order that there might be no after misunderstanding. To this I consented, without seeing its necessity; and Cherkush and the witnesses entered the room. Cherkush rushed forward on seeing me, threw his arms around my neck, and wept as he kissed my cheeks and my hand. Poor fellow! I was overwhelmed with anxiety on his account. His son was then brought in, and pleaded his cause with the commandant. The latter was touched, and said that he found this youth was not one of those concerned in the late rebellion, and would therefore release him immediately. I then counted out to Cherkush the sum I had originally placed in his hand on the battle-field, and added to it the price of a variety of articles, which he had been obliged to yield up. I would have given him much more, but for the witnesses. I feared that his own people and the Toorcumuns would get scent of his gold, and perhaps destroy him, to make themselves heirs to it. I therefore trusted that one of the brothers might still reach Khiva in time to profit by the instructions I had

given, concerning them, to Saleh Muhummud. The parting from this true-hearted and affectionate creature was very painful. It was doubly so, owing to the forlorn position in which I left him, and my inability to render him any return for the benefits I had received at his hand. He had offered, indeed, to quit his country and his people to follow my fortunes; and, in spite of the disparity of our education, I should have delighted to honour and cherish him as the friend to whom I was indebted for life. But my wandering fate rendered this impossible; and I knew too much of the nature of happiness to tempt him to a step which would be regretted by him, once and for ever.

I descended the cliffs by a good road to the quay, and sat in the custom-house whilst a boat was sent for. There, the marks of fire and violence were pointed out to me, as the work of the Toorcumuns, when they burned the Russian boats. The iniquity of such an act was strongly insisted upon, to my great amusement. A Russian priest, whom I had seen in the garrison, entered; a remarkably handsome man, in the graceful robes of his order, and wearing his long and beautiful hair inviolate. There is something singularly pleasing in this custom, so different from the barbarous fashion of shaven crowns. He kissed my cheek when we parted: a Russian mode of salutation which I was not yet broken into. I stepped into the boat and rowed to the ship, a double-masted merchantman, where the only cabin was placed at my disposal.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Description of Nuovo Alexandrofski—Sailing on the Caspian—Songs of the Cossaqs—Sentiment embodied in them—Ten Days' Pilgrimage on a Voyage of 180 Miles—Misery of my People—Whether Pig begets Idol, or Idol begets Pig—Mystifying Properties of a Beard—Heartless Frisks of the greedy Wave—Cossaq Soldiers—Arrival at Mouth of Oorahl—At Gorief—Houses there—Commandant—Evening Saunter—Cossaq Hospitality—Names and Surnames.

THE wind sprang up, and we spread our sails. But as I may have no further opportunity of introducing the subject, it may be as well here to offer a brief sketch of the little fort of Nuovo Alexandrofski, or as the Toorcumuns call it, Dahsh or Dahsch Gullah (the stone fort).

Nuov Alexandrof is a small Russian fort, built about eight years ago to protect the fisheries of the Caspian, and, doubtless, also with a view to the future invasion of Khiva, from which it is distant about 400 miles. For all other objects, it is as ill situated as it is ill constructed; being shut up by the ice during the months of November, December, January, February, and March; and approached and left during the remainder of the year with the utmost difficulty, owing to the shallowness of the water and the intricacy of the navigation. It will be seen that I was ten days on this little voyage of 180 miles. Three days is considered a very favourable passage, and the average, perhaps, is four or five. The cause of this delay is found in the improbability of being favoured, at each fresh turning of the very devious course, with the exact wind requisite to propel the vessel. As, however, soundings are to be had throughout, the anchor may always prevent the vessel from drifting.

The country adjacent to Nuov Alexandrof is a high steppe of clay, covered with wormwood, camel thorn, and another thorny shrub. Its desolate condition, and the causes thereof, have already been noticed. The fort is a square, with bastions, flanks, and curtain; but neither ditch, outwork, or glacis. The hardness of the soil has, perhaps, prevented the digging of a ditch. It stands upon the brink of the lofty cliffs, which are here, however, quite accessible. I was rather amused at hearing one of the gentlemen of the garrison describing it as unassailable from that side. He would be astonished, could he see what sky-built fortresses the English have carried in India, by a coup de main. On the three sides that join the steppe, it is certainly less formidable. The stone wall, of eight and a half feet, well supplied with light field artillery and some 300 bayonets, is an ugly obstacle; but could always be surmounted at a certain sacrifice of life; and, had the Toorcumun horsemen any courage to face artillery, and other fire-arms, it had long since been stormed and taken. A species of palisade, formed of pointed slabs of stone, set upright, renders an approach to these walls difficult to horsemen. It is the only symptom of sagacity, which the work betrays. This fort has no water, but is dependent for that needful article upon a spring half way down the cliff, upon which, I am much mistaken if the guns can bear. There would not be the slightest difficulty, therefore, in cutting off this supply, and reducing the place, without much bloodshed, in a week.

The houses and church of this little port are all of wood: constructed at Astrakan and brought hither in vessels. They are sufficiently neat, and built after Russian models, having a stove and chimney of masonry in the centre, by which the whole house is warmed in the winter. Want of vegetables, and probably some peculiarity of the atmosphere, subject the garrison to severe visitations of scurvy. The garrison, of course, are almost prisoners in their own

walls, for they cannot venture forth, excepting in armed parties; and the steppe offers little excitement to curiosity. Mr. Laymann, however, the naturalist, whose enthusiasm for his profession is backed by talent and a store of information, has discovered in that apparently lifeless steppe, and along those waste and desolate shores, many additions to the known varieties of insect and vegetable world. Let me here take leave of him, with thanks for his kind offices and for the enjoyment of his society, at a moment when manners far less amiable, and a mind far less accomplished, would have been hailed by me with gratitude.

The sails were spread, and I found, with an exultation quite indescribable, that we had left the dismal region of Muhummudism, and were bounding over the blue waves of the Caspian. The very name of that sea is full of music; it had ever been a mine of poetry in my fancy. How large a share it was to have in my destiny, I could not foresee. Now, our faces were turned upon Europe. Those hateful shores fading from sight. Much difficulty was still before me, and a journey by land, of about 1,600 miles, with a wound thrilling painfully to the buffet of a breeze. But the star of hope was in the ascendant; and as to suffering, or any other species of evil, my mind was hardened to endure it. There was a triumph in looking back upon all heaven had brought me through, that made me feel superior to every difficulty.

As the wind of the Caspian piped through the shrouds, and curled the waves around us; the crew broke forth into one of their national anthems, the most plaintive, the most melancholy, the most beautiful ever tossed by rude voices over the ruder billow. Well may the Russians say that the song of their Tartars is the music of the desert wind—the desert wind, blowing at night over a waste shrouded in snow. The spirit that poured out that plaintive measure, must have felt the spell of loneliness, in its sublimest mood. He must have been driven to companionship

with the tameless winds, the rolling planets, the meteor streaming upon the void of night. He must have drunk with Ossian at the selfsame fount of inspiration; have poured out his soul, like him, to things delighting in the wild, unmeasured chord; and indulged, like him, in the luxury of woe.

Some of these songs I had heard at Nuov Alexandrof. Mr. Laymann had translated the sentiment of one or two. They were full of poetry and strains of pure and genuine love. They gave me a high idea of the feeling and morals of the peasants of lower Russia; an idea, not contradicted by the result of after inquiry. These people are passionately fond of music, a recreation unknown amongst the Kuzzauks of Khiva, and almost equally so to Toorcumum and Oozbeg. The former, indeed, have their bards, who, to a rude accompaniment on the guitar, chaunt poems to their chiefs; but I never heard an air or song played by them. This national anthem, which I heard afterwards in every village, until I had passed Moscow, I tried in vain to fix in my memory. The difficulty lay in separating the air from its various accompaniments: for no two voices were singing the same notes. The effect was singularly suited to the occasion, and no less in accord with the tone of my own sensations. Unless my memory deceive me, I was informed, that this is the chaunt used by the Cossaqs, when returning after absence to their homes. Whenever I heard this music rise, it was a token that the wind was fair, and that the Cossaq soldier was speeding, full of hope, toward his welcome home.

Ten weary days were we beaten back by the wind, until we had nearly expended the last drop of fresh water. We were always in soundings, nine and ten feet the average. A heavy sea, in such water, would endanger even the smallest vessel. We dropped anchor when the wind was foul, and put the best face upon the matter. Many fishing vessels of two masts were in sight. These sometimes sent their boats to

us with sturgeon, and a fish resembling the carp. Salmon is found in the Caspian, but I saw none, and was informed that it was then out of season. The sturgeon lives at the very bottom of the sea, a habit which gives a certain clue for his capture. One of these fish were brought alive into the vessel. A piece of wood was thrust into its mouth, and it was then drowned by submersion in the sea. It was immediately cut open; the roe was extracted, rinsed with water, to free it from blood, and immediately spread upon bread, and eaten as a great delicacy. After having seen this process, I had no fancy for fresh caviar: but when it had been kept some time, I could look at it without disgust, and it certainly is a very agreeable addition to the coarse bread of the villages. I could not persuade any of my people to eat fish, which they had never before seen, and of which they knew not the spiritual properties, whether to bless or damn their souls. Summud Khaun was at the head of the orthodox party; I believe, most of the others might have been persuaded to garnish bread, hard as a brickbat, blacker than ink, and sourer than verjuice, with certain titbits of these questionable sea-monsters, had *he* not held forth against the practice. I procured them, with great difficulty, a bag of parched peas: for the adjutant had pocketed a liberal supply of money allowed by Government for their support, and had actually laid in no provisions for them. This, and the aforesaid black bread, soaked in water to make it soft, was all the nourishment the poor fellows had, on this their first miserable taste of a sea voyage; and the peas were not procured without heavy bribery.

A number of little images of the Virgin Mary were stuck up on deck, and to these the crew and the soldiers resorted morning and evening, to bow and cross themselves. My Muhummudan servants were a good deal scandalized, at what they were silly enough to mistake for idolatry; and I fear I was not very suc-

cessful in explaining to them the precise shade of difference, between the images of the Hindoo and of the Greek churches, respectively. They had hitherto attributed all the hardships experienced, since our arrival in civilized Europe, to the effect produced upon the constitution, mental and physical, by absorption into the human veins of the juices of the unclean beast. They were now bewildered in the attempt to distinguish cause from effect. Whether a taste for the unclean One resulted naturally from bobbing before pictures: or whether the essence of hog had any tendency to make men reverence images. But each taste was alike subject of their holy abhorrence. And to each they exclaimed, stroking their beards, "La hôl! La hôl!" (Avaunt! Avaunt!)

There was on board this vessel a respectable old Tartar Moolla, who understood a few words of Persian, and could speak Toorkish and Russian with equal facility. I scraped acquaintance with this gentleman, and as I was engaged in reading a Persian work, the Huzzarr Misl, I gave him occasional lessons in the same. This, my abstinence from pork, my long beard, the respect with which I always mentioned the names of Moosulmaun worthies, (objects of reverence to my new acquaintance) and my neglect of the images of the Virgin, quite mystified the adjutant and doctor, and one of them sent a secret deputation to my servants, to ascertain whether I was a Soonnie or a Sheah. I was amused at this, and of course gave them no aid in solving the question.

I mentioned, in a previous chapter, that my servants had swallowed the gold, which I had divided amongst them. Poor Nizaum, after suffering much torture, and nearly dying from the golden pills, had been relieved. But Summud Khaun entered Nuovo Alexandrof in a condition, which appeared to me sufficiently desperate. It was in vain, that I purchased of the doctor promise after promise to attend to the case of my servants. They were utterly

neglected by him, and I dared not inform him of the contents of their stomachs; not from any distrust of the means he might take for the extraction of the gold; but simply, because I am a cautious fellow, and have not solved, as yet, the Promethean problem. I now questioned Summud Khaun as to his condition. "Are you any better, Summud Khaun?"

"Shookkur," (thanksgiving) he replied, hanging his head, and looking any thing but thankful.

"You were delivered, I trust, before you came aboard."

His face grew long, and he hung his head lower than ever, fixing his eye gloomily upon the waves, that were frisking and frolicking about, heedless of the heart they had broken. The subject was always a sore one; he had been completely outwitted. Six and twenty golden ducats, the lion's share of the spoil.

My poor people, in the most gloomy state of mind, generally remained below deck, suffering miserably from sea-sickness, and tormented by the colonies they had brought with them from Kuzzauk land. I went on deck in the afternoon, when the fervour of the sun was abated, and seated myself under an awning, which had been spread for the purpose. There was little, it may be believed, to break the monotony of those ten days. The doctor spoke a few words of Latin, with an accent that rendered it for the most part unintelligible to me. Mine in return, from the same cause, was difficult to him. The Moolla knew a little Persian, and this was our sole means of communicating with the Russians.

The soldiers returning to their duty were fine, well-built, hardy, athletic fellows, of middle height; the Cossaqs being the largest of the Russian soldiers. They are imperfectly drilled, but for any duties that require passive courage and endurance, they are surpassed by none in the world. They are also cheerful and tractable, and their food is the poorest that

human creatures can exist on; being little superior to the nourishment required by the vegetable world. They frequently wear beards; the beard being a distinction, to which the Old Russians cling, as to part of a religion, differing slightly from that of modern Russia.

Just as we were seriously uneasy, at the low state of our supply of fresh water, a fair breeze sprung up, and bore us to the mouth of the river Oorahl, and up the current, to the port of Gorief. The town itself is some six miles distant, and to this we proceeded, after some little delay; first in row-boats up a canal, and then in cars to Gorief. These were the first specimens of the carriages, I had so often described to my people, and wretched specimens they proved. The horses, however, set off at a gallop, and carried us at that pace to Gorief, over the low grassy plain intervening.

As we approached it, the small deep river shewed to advantage: but there was a want of bushes, gardens, and trees, that would have defeated all pretensions of the handsomest town, to interest, and had nothing of compensation to look for in the wood-built houses of the little fishing town of Gorief. I was conveyed to the market place, where a very nice apartment was allotted me, in a good house; my people, excepting Nizaum, were conveyed to another house, where I paid them a visit. The adjutant was anxious to sleep in the same room with me; but I sent for the commandant, and had him turned out.

The commandant called to see me. He is a very gentlemanly, and I believe a very worthy man. I regret, that my memory for names does not help me to his. He brought another doctor, a far more intelligent man than the person who screwed off my finger. This gentleman immediately changed the alum used to cleanse my wound, for magnesia; a change which proved very beneficial. The com-

mandant, after many expressions of sympathy, and offers of service, left me to repose.

The room I occupied faced the market-place. It had double windows, which, like the doors, shewed excellent carpentry. The furniture was of some white wood, having a beautiful satin gloss. It was either poplar or plane, but I could not distinctly understand which, and the floor and wainscoat were neatly planked. An excellent bed (barring its contents) was in one corner; and there were large mirrors in frames of mahogany, and wardrobes of the same material. I was astonished to find so much of comfort and luxury in an obscure fishing town, upon the remotest frontier of Russia; but this was not to be the last of my marvels.

The next day, I called upon the commandant, whom I found in a house handsomely furnished and fitted up. He promised me the means of prosecuting my journey next morning toward Orenburgh. In the evening I wandered with the doctor along the banks of the Oorahl. The twilight, falling upon objects belonging to civilized life, impressed me with feelings of delight which, on consideration of my position, may be comprehended. The houses, picturesque as wooden houses ever are, stood sufficiently distant from the river to allow of a decent road between. The river flowed in alternate light and gloom, reflecting, in long wavy lines, the fires lighted on its banks. The boats slumbered in deep shadow; and whilst all betokened the hour of repose, there was enough of life to speak of the enjoyment of hours, rescued from the grasp of industry and toil. The inhabitants might often be seen, seated in a species of verandah above the entrance, enjoying their potations, whether tea or grog, and whiling away the time, in chat. One of these was hailed by my companion, and returned the halloo, with the lungs of a Silenus; commanding him by all the powers that watch over hospitable rites, to surrender himself for

the evening. Instantly afterwards, down came the jovial Cossaq, and the two ran into one-another's arms, slobbering, this the beard, that the smooth chin of his friend, with kisses. I narrowly escaped a like fate; for the hearty old boy was advanced to about fourth sea's point, and saw a friend in every face. He made us be seated, in spite of a hundred excuses, and sent for refreshments. I saw his daughter, a rosy girl of eighteen, busied in these arrangements: but to my disappointment, none of the fair sex appeared: a symptom of our lingering proximity to Asia, and its degrading laws.

Trays were brought in, salted fish, caviar, sandwiches, and sweetmeats of various kinds, flanked by bottles of excellent wine and potent spirits. My green wound was fortunately a valid excuse, backed by the authority of the doctor. But the Cossaq, who had now reached dancing point, in the mysteries of Bacchus, was almost in despair at my abstinence. He had served in the army it appeared, and had now retired to a snug competency, in the shape of a private fortune. We broke away from him with difficulty; and mounting a long-backed vehicle, which admitted of four on each side, *dos à dos*, cantered off to the new doctor's abode, which he entreated me to enter. Having entered, wine and spirits were again pressed upon me, and the doctor was evidently pleased, at the notice I took of his neatly furnished apartment. Finally, I reached my quarters in good time, and fell asleep, in spite of a fresh set of hospitable attentions, from three different Races.

I must not forget a characteristic anecdote. The commandant, on making out my passport, desired to know my name. I replied, "Captain James Abbott."

"Yes," said the aide-de-camp, "but all we want is your baptismal name and that of your father."

"My baptismal name is James, my father's Henry Alexius."

"Very well then, you are James Henry Alexiowitz," and he was writing accordingly.

"If you insist upon writing that, of course, you are welcome," I observed; "but to tell my Government that there has arrived at Gorief one James, the son of Henry, will be to tell them nothing; for in London alone there may be a 100,000 Jameses, sons of Henry; whereas, if you call me Captain James Abbott, Bengal Artillery, every one will understand who I am."

I am not sure which plan was adopted; but our Foreign Office would be much edified by learning of the movements of one James, son of Henry. In Russia only great families retain the patronymic; the others have only Christian names.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Departure from Gorief—Vehicles—Rate of Progress—Aspect of the Country—Chain of Posts from Orenburgh to Gorief—Mr. Chicachoff—His kind Attention—First News of the Failure of the Russian Expedition—Peasantry—Town of Oorahlsk—The generous Major of Cossaqs of the Oorahl—The hospitable Cossaqs—Their Dress.

NEXT morning, the arrangements for my progress were completed. Some four or five cars were in waiting for my suite, and a species of chariot, without springs, was to bear me the first stage, after which I was to mount a car. We went off at a gallop, a couple of Kuzzauk horsemen, with long spears attending me, and four more guarding my servants. These guards, the commandant explained, were not to prevent me seizing the empire by a *coup de main*, but entirely to shew me honour. The adjutant craved permission to share my vehicle the first stage, and I was weak enough to comply; but at the second, finding him still bent upon crushing my wounded hand, by squeezing into the low, narrow, miserable car, I was obliged to eject him without ceremony. These cars have a low awning of wood, which serves the threefold purpose of excluding the sun, breaking the traveller's head, and multiplying the noise *ad infinitum*. The cars have no springs, and they are borne by three horses abreast, at a hand-gallop, over every obstacle, whether canal, ditch, or only broken ground. If the reader will conceive himself seated in a large drum, tied to the tail of a wild bull, engaged in a steeple-chase, he will form some notion of the jolting and the horrible, stunning noise of these primitive vehicles. If he will remember that my wound was

still unhealed, and so tender that even at rest I could scarcely bear the pressure of the hand upon a sling, and was now obliged to hold it day and night in an upright posture, supported only by the muscles of the arm, he will not envy me this journey, nor the constant apprehension that the rotten wheels of my car might break in half, or its wooden axles snap or catch fire from the friction. Indeed the latter casualty happened more than once, and two of the cars suffered from their untired wheels severing in the centre, which precipitated some of my servants through the air. Nevertheless, there is something exhilarating in in the dash of Russian driving. Our Jehus were common peasants; the cars, vehicles used to carry fish, etc. from station to station. Whenever one attempted to pass another, a race ensued; the trot is a pace despised by Russians, and nothing but a headlong gallop will serve them. So long as tackle holds, roads are smooth, and horses keep their feet, this is satisfactory, enough; but some weeks subsequently, in descending the Oohral mountains at a gallop, with five horses in harness, one of the leaders fell, and of course all the others, as well as their carriage, were hurled over him, and the unlucky post-boy, whom we picked up scarcely alive, with the thigh and calf of his right leg ploughed open to the very bone, his head cut in the most ghastly manner, and his whole body bruised. It was his own fault, to be sure, for I had several times cautioned him of the folly of such headlong doings; but it made me melancholy for weeks afterwards.

I have talked of galloping over ditches and canals. I am not speaking figuratively. Whenever the banks shelved sufficiently, it was done at a dash, and on one occasion the car was inundated, as we sank with a splash into the deep water, and the horses, after themselves floundering up the precipitous bank, strove in vain to stir the car, which was extricated with much difficulty by the bank it had descended. The road fortunately at this season was excellent, passing over

the fluvial soil of the river Oohral; not made, but merely marked out by high posts, painted in alternate bands of black and white. The black indicating the track in winter, and the white in summer nights. Of course, when rain falls, it is scarcely passable, and when the snow melts, is still worse; but wet weather is rare in Russia, and in dry weather, her unmade roads are always her best. On reaching villages, the hoof-prints made by the cattle where the clay was soft, and now hardened ineffaceably by the sun, render the road the most rugged that can be conceived; and I always suffered more from the hundred yards or so at the entrance to villages than from the rest of the entire stage.

The soil is a rich, dark, vegetable clay; water is at the surface, and the level of the river is depressed not many feet below the soil, so that irrigation is the simplest thing possible. But the people of these parts, having still abundant room for wandering, are not easily reclaimed from their immemorial pastoral habits; and the utmost encouragement of Government has induced but a trifling proportion of the population to settle in villages and cultivate the soil. Even these villages, as is testified by their extensive folds for cattle, are rich in flocks and herds to an extent quite unknown in more civilized districts. On entering one of these villages, and considering its entire want of those adornments and comforts of gardens, trees, fruits, and flowers, which accompany a more advanced state of society,—that it is in fact but a standing camp, a position always regarded as a nuisance by wanderers,—we are not at a loss to comprehend the reluctance of the Tartar shepherd to forego his clean, open residence upon the grassy steppe for the mud and abominations of a village; to exchange his sense of freedom for the constant presence of masters and superiors, and his luxurious and indolent occupations for the severe labours of a husbandman. In fact, scarcely a village would exist upon this road, but that

the Government found it necessary to erect some barrier along the river Oohral against the depredations and incursions of the Kirgheez, whose territory lies south of the stream.

This barrier is generally supposed by us, to be a chain of forts, or entrenched camps: but is really a line of peaceful villages and post-houses, connected by the beautiful road aforesaid; and thus affording a safe and easy communication between Orenburgh, (the head-quarters of the district,) and its Southernmost limit. At each post-house, a guard of four or five horsemen is stationed, furnished by the Cossaqs, whose tribute is military service. These horsemen, better armed and mounted than the Kirgheez*, and animated by a higher spirit, are a most effectual protection to the frontier. The work is recent, and reflects great credit upon the Government. The villages are seldom more than eight miles apart, and have already a flourishing appearance. The houses are constructed of wood, the gables turned to the street; which gives the village the aspect of a camp. They are in themselves picturesque objects, but require the contrast of foliage to do them justice. On the right bank of the Gorahl, which the road occupies, scarcely a tree is found from Gorief to Orenburgh: but upon the left bank, bushes, and afterwards trees, appeared, which sometimes thickened into woods. I could not distinguish the leaves, and had been so long absent from Europe, as to form no certain estimate of their nature from the character of their branches, etc. But they appeared to me to be birch and oak.

We occasionally came upon herds of galloways and horses. The former larger and finer than the Kuzzauk galloway. The latter, not large, but sometimes

* Kirgheez, a name given by the Russians to distinguish the hostile and Muhummudan Kuzzauks from their own Christianised Cossaqs. The name is unknown to Asiatics, and seems to be adopted in Russia, from the word "Kheirgah," a felt tent. This word again seems to be a Persian pun upon their enemies the Tartars—"Kheir" being an ass, and "Gah" a place—and the compound signifying an ass's fold.

beautiful. My people had never seen so rich a country, and marvelled at the neglect of such a soil. In the outset, the soil was still covered with wormwood; but as we progressed, this gave placed gradually to grass, until we saw around us, limitless pastures of the richest herbage, in which the wild flowers were beginning to open; and to my great delight, I once more followed a road, upon the sides of which, weeds and grassy tufts found encouragement to spring. This was to me the most assured sign of a transition from Asia to Europe: for from Agra to the North of the Caspian, such an appearance is utterly unknown.

The peasantry of this part of Russia are chiefly clad in the chogah, or cloak of Bokhara. Their headdress alone savours of Europe. Even the women have a Tartar dress: but, as we progressed, these were gradually mixed with the costume of Europe. Twice a day we halted for an hour, to discuss the rude fare of the peasants. I could not ascertain, what place we held in their abodes, whether guests or intruders: but I strongly suspected, that these houses were no castles, against any one wearing an epaulette. Several times, Tartar peasants of Moosulmaun persuasion brought my starving servants a supply of their best food, clotted cream, the most delicious curds in the world (even by the confession of my people), and coarse, but good bread.

We were now approaching Oorahlsk, a considerable town on the Oorahl. I was eating some dinner with the doctor in a post house, when in walked a tall, handsome man, of dark complexion and regular features, whom I should have pronounced a Spaniard, had he not addressed me in pure English by name, and introduced himself to me as Mr. Chicachoff, travelling toward Astrakhan; who having just left the kind and hospitable Hettman of the Cossaqs of the Oorahl, had been commissioned by that officer to apologise for the inconveniences and hardships I had experienced; to lay them at the door of the commandant

of Nuov Alexandrof, who had thought the leader of ten thousand Toorcumun horse a most dangerous person, and upon the wretched accommodation for comfort, which fishing towns and Tartar villages could afford. He himself, the Hettman regretted, was summoned to Orenburgh by General Perroffski, the governor: but he would leave such orders as should ensure me more respect and attention, for the remainder of my journey.

It is not possible to give the reader an idea of my delight, in once more listening to my native tongue. I hung on the speaker's words. I would not believe, would not suffer him to be anything but an Englishman. I questioned him of his appearance. It seemed to me, as if a second Saleh Muhummud had been sent to me, in my need. He spoke English better than I had ever heard it spoken by a foreigner; without hesitation, without introduction of foreign idiom, with only the slightest accent in the world. Sufficient, but no more, to have made him pass for a Northumbrian. Even the tone of his thoughts and his manner were English. He accounted for this, by saying that he had been brought up amongst English, and had travelled in America. He sent for some supplies from his carriage; but the delicious white bread could not tempt me to forego a word of my native tongue. I was intoxicated with the sound. Let any one, who would accuse me of extravagance, think first of all what I have suffered, since last I had heard these sounds; that I had also been seventeen years an exile, and that the appearance of this kind friend, for such he proved, was like the first native bird which flies aboard the vessel of one who has wandered, without compass or chart, at the mercy of the winds. My mind, since my arrival on the Russian frontier, had settled down into a stern joyless, and careless mood, which there was little to interrupt. The bodily pain I suffered, assisted it. My perplexity in a land of strangers, with none to understand my speech; and

the task before me of negotiating the most delicate matters, in a tongue (the French) which I spoke stammeringly, for the first time in my life; all tended to make me nourish that low fire of determination to endure and to persist, which shuns excitement, and is endangered by any promise, that may elevate only to extinguish it. I was, therefore, surprised at my present enjoyment, and gave way to it with a secret reservation, to suffer it no power of administering to fallacious hope.

Mr. Chicachoff, seeing the adjutant and doctor fidgetting to be gone, desired them to proceed without me, and promised to bring me in his carriage. They demurred, and made a fuss; but he spoke to them in peremptory terms, which they found themselves forced to obey. I myself objected to a motion which was to carry back Mr. Chicachoff one stage, and of course be to him the loss of two; but he would not listen to my remonstrance. We sat talking some time longer, then mounted his carriage and pursued my route. The relief from the stunning clatter and jolting of the car, was most grateful. I felt as a fish might feel, who is suddenly jerked back into the water, by the overthrow of the market cart. I seemed literally gliding through a smoother and happier element.

I now, for the first time, learned, that the Russian army of invasion had been recalled to Orenburgh; owing to the losses sustained in baggage cattle, from the severity of the winter. Mr. Chicachoff himself had been, as a volunteer, on the expedition. He described the sufferings of the troops as very great, owing to the intensity of the cold, which froze their brandy; of course, breaking the bottles in the process. The thermometer was at 40° of Reaumur. The snow in many places five feet deep. I am not certain, that I detail these facts as Mr. Chicachoff narrated them, because I have heard many accounts of the expedition subsequently, and was not in a condition to take notes, during my residence in the Orenburgh district. I

must, therefore, decline making him my authority, for the precise letter of this account. Through snow so deep and so feathery, it was, of course, impossible for laden cattle to advance. Equally impossible was it, that they should reach the pasture of the steppe. The troops, therefore, were arrested at the severest portion of the journey; the highlands between the Caspian and Aral seas, or rather a little north of that point, and near one of the streams of the river Yem or Ember; and there the camels died in such numbers as to render the prosecution of the invasion, for the time, impracticable. Mr. Chicachoff, however, said that it must, and would, as a matter of course, be resumed, and carried through; and his opinion I found confirmed, not only by the impression which was general in the district, but by the measures actually in progress on the field of operations. He spoke of Perroffski in the glowing terms, which I had anticipated from previous inquiry. He considered him entitled to the epithet, "noble," which I had heard many apply to him. He knew no one of whom he could so unreservedly say, that he was thoroughly honourable. This was to me most welcome information.

He spoke of Moscow as being peopled with the élite of Russia, and thought I should observe a marked difference on approaching that capital, in favour of the features and general appearance of the people. He promised me an introduction to the Governor of the Kremlin. How short appeared that stage. How miserable to my eye was the sight of the next village, as it gradually grew from the soil. He detained me long at the next post house, pressing upon me every article of comfort or luxury he had brought with him, and afterwards writing me letters to the kind and accomplished Hettman, to a Major of Cossaqs, at Oorahlsk, whose name, I blush to say, I must reserve for a succeeding edition, but whose kindness is graven on my heart; to a Mr. —— at Orenburgh, and to the Governor of the Kremlin, Moscow. We then parted,

and I rejoiced to learn, there was some hope of my meeting him at St. Petersburg. His departure was felt in proportion to the happiness I had derived from that fleeting interview.

In passing through villages on this journey, I found that news of my approach had always preceded me, by the Cossaq sent ahead to prepare post horses. The consequence was, that the villages were lined on either side with their inhabitants, almost exclusively women and children: the men being absent with the cattle, or engaged in the fields, or employed in military service. The dress of these women was singularly picturesque and neat. My impression, from this glimpse of the peasantry of Russia, was most favourable. They are not, indeed, handsome, they are seldom comely. But the men are robust and athletic; and the women made such a show, as I imagine could be made by no other country of Europe. I do not, of course, speak of their charms, but of the singular decency of their outfit. They are fond of colours, and of colours that harmonise; scarlet, crimson, white, and light blue. The groups were most fascinating to my eye. The complexion is high. The eyes are grey. The features in no way remarkable. A beautiful woman I did not see between Gorief and Oorahlsk; and a slovenly woman had been equally a rarity. Often we found them enjoying, in the evening, their national music. At one village, I persuaded them to dance before me. A young woman stepped into the circle, and began a pas seul to a merry tune. A young clown, after much encouragement, was persuaded to join her. The two confronted one another, the youth making desperate love with eyes and gesture, whilst his feet were rapidly moving, and the lass turning her back just as his hopes had reached their highest. The performance was admirable. The wit and spirit of the parties were maintained to the last. This was the first specimen I had

of the humour of the Russians, which is perhaps not to be surpassed.

At one of the better houses of a Cossaq of the old religion, I found hanging up a page of prayers, in the character still retained by this people, and which, without being Greek, resembles the Greek character more nearly than does the more modern character of Russia. Every house had its images in a corner, to which my attendants bowed and crossed themselves. The good people of this house were in great tribulation, because the doctor was smoking a cigar; as they account the practice an abomination; a sentiment in which I heartily concur. I observed that the doctor and adjutant laughed heartily at a religion which employed in its sacred books a character different from their own. My poor Moosulmauns were more charitable; they glanced at the wooden and gilt gods and goddesses, stroked their beards, and sighed, "Lah Hôl!" but that was all. The vast numbers of the unclean beast,—that unmentionable abomination, alarmed as well as astonished them. They knew not where it was to end. I believe they expected to come upon a region where the sole inhabitants would be hogs. The earth bacon, the grass bristles, the timber crackling, the trees pigtails, the men, women, and children, black puddings. Already Summud Khaun, leader of the orthodox, had put his teeth under a severe quarantine. He smelt pork in every aliment, and would eat nothing but milk and black bread. He was one day expressing to me his wonder at the numbers of the grunting tribe, "What can they, Sir, do with so many?"

In an evil hour, I answered him jocosely, "Isn't the milk very fine?"

"Lah hôl!" exclaimed Summud: and the next day I found he had left off milk, lest he should be nourished upon what he called "essence of pig." I reasoned, argued, remonstrated with him; assured

him that pig's milk was an elixir, unknown even to the Feringee. That I had been joking, in the assurance that he understood a joke. It was all useless, Summud Khaun hunched his shoulders, and declared that if he *must* go to the devil, it should not be upon a current of pig's essence. Summud Khaun abstained religiously from milk until he reached England.

We now saw rising upon the horizon, the spires of the fair town of Oorahlsk. I was unprepared for so extensive a town, still less could I have anticipated anything so beautiful as its main street. With eyes, so long accustomed to the miserable domestic architecture of the Hindoo and Moosulmaun, I was, perhaps, no right judge of the beauty of European cities, considered as such. I was, indeed, delighted with Oorahlsk, and my people were wonderstruck. To them it was all enchantment. The wide, free, clean street, the elegant houses, the least a palace in their eyes. The beautiful women, dressed in a costume quite new to them, and elegant in the eyes of the most fastidious, walking unveiled in the streets, yet without any other appearance of immodesty; all struck Nizaum, my more immediate attendant, as a page from the volume of Paradise. The women of Oorahlsk are famous for their beauty. I myself was allowed no opportunity of judging; for in only one case, on entering a house, was I introduced to the lady of the establishment. Some remnant of Asiatic prejudice seems to cling even to the Oorahlskians. It was much lamented by one, to whom the principal charm of civilised society is the presence, at all social intercourse, of the fairer and better sex.

Apartments were assigned me in a good house, well situated. The staff officer waited upon me, and desired me to call upon the officer commanding. Although I thought he might have paid me the first visit, I did not object to this. A drôshki was placed at my disposal, and I soon found myself in a house

elegantly furnished, and in presence of a gentlemanly man. He gave me a seat; but, by a barbarous system of etiquette, kept all his officers standing. After the usual compliments, he began to question me of my journey, and gradually of my purpose. Perceiving that the conversation was assuming the air of a cross-examination, I inquired whether his Emperor had commissioned him to put these questions; if not, I should defer answering them until put by His Imperial Majesty's order. He bowed, made a thousand apologies, and dropped the cross-examination. I took a survey of the room. All was in the best style. Engravings of great merit were suspended from the walls in handsome frames. The room was well furnished, the furniture excellent. There was but one thing wanting, the presence of woman.

Dinner was served at an early hour of the afternoon. Now, at least, I hoped the fair ones would appear. I was disappointed. A first-rate dinner was produced in the French fashion, but exhibiting several national dishes; one of which is a species of soup, in which raw herbs are mingled, and with which salt-fish is eaten, I never was reconciled to this dish, which always appeared to me the dropsy of a bad salad. Another and a better dish is fish soup. But I cannot imagine it would answer made from any fish but the sturgeon, which abounds in gristle and other gelatinous substances. The wines were superior, but I neglected all for the delicious wine of the Don, which is only inferior to champagne, but which is despised in Russia, because it can be drunk by men of moderate fortune. A red wine, the growth also of the empire, was shown me. I thought it quite worthy of companionship with the Donski. So far as I recollect, it comes from the province bordering the Caucasus, and resembles a sweet claret. There are few regions of the world, that can boast two such wines. The finer of the Don wine is grown from some cuttings, which the famous Hettmann Platoff

brought with him from the Rhine. The kind-hearted Colonel pressed his good cheer heartily. Hospitality is a Russian virtue, and one that is welcome to strangers. As for me, ever since my arrival in Russia, I had been devouring bread in quantities not to be computed. I now found a fresh luxury in the potatoe; and these two simple cates were more delicious to my palate, than the chefs d'œuvres of the cuisine. I learned from the Colonel, that Perroffski was about to visit St. Petersburg, and that Rikkasowski was on his road to join the governor previous to his departure. That the latter would pass through Oorahlsk next day, when I should probably see him.

Accordingly, next morning a drôshki was brought to the door, and an aide-de-camp entering, summoned me to visit him. I found him attended by the officers of the station, a tall, plebeian, unmilitary figure. He led me into a private apartment, and questioned me of my mission. I begged to inquire, whether he had commission to this effect from his Emperor, as my business was with the Court. I had heard, I said, that Perroffski was governor of this district. He said I could reply to Perroffski if I pleased, and that there was no necessity of my answering his queries. He should meet me at Orenburgh, and should be happy to be of service to me. He spoke French fluently, but with an accent that was quite unintelligible. I was equally embarrassed to understand him, and to answer in my own imperfect French. Our conference, therefore, was not productive of much enlightenment on either side. I met him afterwards at Orenburgh, where I found him, under different auspices, a much more polite member of society.

After leaving him, I went to call upon the head of the Police, and here, for the first time, was introduced to a Russian lady. She is daughter of one of the most celebrated historians of the empire. She brought in her daughter, a most exquisite little thing of about eight years, a creature that will some day bewilder and ensnare.

Taking leave of this lady and her beautiful daughter, I sought out the residence of the Major of Cossaqs, to whom Mr. Chicachoff had given me an introduction, and who had indeed called upon me that morning, with truly Russian hospitality, to make me a proffer of his services and of his purse. I found him a tall, stout, gentlemanly man, having the frank manly bearing of his brethren in arms. On the table of the room into which I was ushered were certain signs that the fair sex *had* been there; but they were there no more. I found that Mr. Chicachoff had begged the Major to procure me some kind of carriage for the continuance of my journey to Orenburgh. He assured me I was most welcome to his. I objected to the inconvenience I was putting him to, and said I should much prefer purchasing a vehicle, if he knew of any for sale. He assured me there were none procurable at Oorahlsk, and would not hear of any possible inconvenience to him by the arrangement he suggested. I had too little fluency in the French tongue to fight a good battle. In fact, the offer was so kindly made, and my acceptance would so evidently gratify the worthy Major, that I accepted it with many thanks. There is no instance in which I regret more the loss of a name than the present; for on reaching Orenburgh, I was recommended to send back the carriage by the adjutant, who was to return to Gorief. He was lingering at Orenburgh when I went on a trip into the district; and when I returned the carriage had been taken back to Oorahlsk, without any note of acknowledgment from me. Most fully did I purpose sending such a letter by the post, but the extreme difficulty of scrawling with the left hand, my miserable French, which, having been neglected some seventeen years, was quite unfit to appear on paper, and my only companion's ignorance of the Major's name, always disconcerted my intention. It is not every one who would volunteer to a stranger the loan of his carriage for a journey of several hundred miles

over country roads; nor have we met many who would press upon a stranger, whom he might never again see, the free use of his purse.

Wine and other refreshments were brought, and the conversation took that jovial turn in which the merry warm-hearted Cossaqs delight. "You will go away," they said, "and report of us, that we are uncivilized. You shall not add, that we do not love the stranger. We are a rude race, and have little to offer an Englishman that can be acceptable to the inhabitant of so luxurious a land. But what we have is heartily at his service, and we will add our best wishes that his affairs may prosper."

I replied, and I now repeat it, that I rejoiced in an accident that had made me acquainted with so estimable and warm-hearted a people. That the name of Cossaq, which heretofore had awakened only ideas of the courage, hardihood, and gallantry of an uncultured nation, would henceforward be inseparably linked with courtesy, hospitality, and worth; that polish had been carried as far in their case, as was healthful; it had improved their natural advantages, without effacing the features of their character; that I could honestly say of them *good* alone; and that I was sure they never could have cause to regret the visit of any traveller, who would truly report upon them; that, as we had been comrades in the last European war, so I trusted we should ever continue friends and allies. One of the staff-officers, who was perfectly familiar with French, acted as my interpreter. Should this page ever meet his or their eye, I hereby greet most heartily the kind Cossaqs of the Oorahl. The dress of this battalion is that of a regular cavalry corps. It is peculiarly neat and gentleman-like. Being blue throughout, with a narrow white girdle. The sword is of the fashion used in Circassia; it has no guard to the hilt, is nearly straight, but made for cutting as well as thrusting. The handle is half buried in the velvet scabbard, and the

pommel is cleft, as a rest for the rifle. It is slung by a single thong, so that the wearer, when on his knee, can bring it in front of him, and set it upright, as a rest for his piece. The want of a hilt is a serious defect. I did not see any of this corps under arms, so cannot speak of them as horsemen.

The distance from Gorief to Oorahlsk is about three hundred and ninety miles, and from Oorahlsk to Orenburgh, about one hundred and ninety miles, making a total of five hundred and eight miles.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Departure from Oorahlsk—Vehicles—Approach to Orenburgh—Orenburgh Quarters—General Perroffski, Governor of Orenburgh—The Hettmann of the Oorahl—Perroffski's Armoury—Generous Conduct of Perroffski—The Masks—Spirits of the Mighty—The Rival Heroes.

IN the evening, our preparations for departure were complete, and the carriage was in attendance. The body of these vehicles is that of a barouche. They have no springs, properly so termed, but rest upon two elastic shafts, which again rest upon the axletrees, fore and aft. Although, therefore, far less easy than English carriages, they are infinitely more so than the miserable, bone-breaking cars, in which, hitherto, I had with much torture travelled. This was indeed luxury and repose, and a hundred times I blessed the kind Cossaq Major, who had deprived himself, perhaps for months, of this convenience, to administer to the comfort of a stranger, whose only claim upon him was his helplessness.

We proceeded as before, tracking the right bank of the Oorahl, of which we never were long out of sight. The villages and small towns were precisely like those hitherto seen. The wooden houses with their broad eaves, and ornamented gables, in themselves highly picturesque, but wanting the accompaniment of foliage. The churches we met with were always ugly; indeed, I have seen but four decent churches in Russia, of which one is at Moscow, and three are at St. Petersburg. Many have been made ugly, at a great cost of pains and cash. The horses used in travelling are Cossaq galloways. Excepting in the

immediate vicinity of villages, the steppe continued unbroken, until, ascending the high bank of the Oorahl, Orenburgh was seen in the distance. We then descended to the river Sakmara, which was crossed on a raft, and pursued our journey through woods and thickets of oak, beech, fir, etc., which cover the low land between this river and the Oorahl, and, on emerging from the valley, found ourselves close to the gates of Orenburgh.

The site of this capital, for such it is to a district more extensive than many kingdoms, is upon a plateau overlooking the river Oorahl, and, at some distance on the north, defended by the river Sakmara. It retains the wall and ditch, which formerly rendered it a stronghold, and which might still resist the desultory attacks of the savages, whom alone it has to fear. It is almost exclusively a military post. Yet hither resorted, in times of peace, the caravans from Bokhara and Khiva, and, in order that the merchants of those countries might be kept separate from the inhabitants of Orenburgh, a large warehouse was built for them beyond the walls. General Perroffski, the governor of the entire district, has a house and garden in the English style, near the western gate. The country around is steppe.

On my arrival, I was shewn to some particularly nice apartments of a house in the main street. I looked around in surprise, for we were still severed from Tartary (where houses are unknown, and the inhabitants of the steppe dress in skins), by the slender stream of the Oorahl alone; and here I found the house of an ordinary gentleman hung with beautiful paintings,* and large mirrors, and having furniture that would have been considered handsome in London.

* I have since heard that the secret of the possession by Russians of so many paintings of merit is the wonderful facility with which Russian artists copy pictures by the masters. If those I saw were copies, as, from the circumstances, seems not improbable, they reflect great credit upon the copyists.

Soon after my arrival a young officer of the staff corps entered, and introduced himself to me as Lieutenant Pekoffski, aide-de-camp to General Perroffski, who desired to see me. This young man, who was my companion during the remainder of my residence in Russia, spoke English fluently. I was delighted at the rencontre, and accompanied him to Perroffski's palace, where I was ushered into the study of this nobleman.

Perroffski was the friend and companion of Nicholas ere he became emperor; and his high talents, and noble qualities, have enabled him to retain his place in the regard of his sovereign. I had seen many likenesses of Perroffski in passing through his district. I now found that they were generally correct, and I keenly examined the original. The countenance was shrewd, and very intelligent; yet I confess, that had not my own experience borne out the testimony of others, I should not have argued from it all the worth and high honour which characterise the man. He was in fullest dress, and wore his orders. He told me he was running up, immediately, to St. Petersburgh, but would take care that I should want for nothing during my detention at Orenburgh, and pending the answer of the British ambassador there. Meanwhile, the services of Lieutenant Pekoffski were at my disposal, if I chose to employ them; but he mentioned this solely for my accommodation, and had no desire to attach any one to me, contrary to my inclination. He trusted to my honour not to hold intercourse with Tartars during my stay in the district. I returned to my new quarters, happy in having, at length, found one whose conduct did not fall short of his high reputation.

The ensuing day Perroffski called upon me, but in so different a dress, and with so little ceremony, that I had pressed his hand ere I was aware it was he. He made a thousand obliging offers; and every hour that he remained at Orenburgh, he discovered some

new method of administering to my comfort. He hoped to see me that day at dinner, and regretted that his absence would prevent his seeing me as his guest daily. Accordingly, at about three o'clock, I rendered myself at his palace, and found assembled there all the principal officers of the station. His saloon was fitted up with every article of luxury and elegance. I found there some very promising paintings by Russian artists. He took me apart, and told me, that fearing I might find Orenburgh dull, he would afford me the means of visiting the curiosities of his district. At the same time, as this was done on his own responsibility, he must beg I would not publish the result.

Perroffski's manners are manly, plain, and unaffected. But he preserves the strictest etiquette amongst the officers who surround him. Rikkasowki, who had treated me rather cavalierly on a former occasion, was now all smiles and bows to him whom it pleased Perroffski to honour. The kind and gentlemanly Hettmann of the Oorahl came and introduced himself to me. He bears his character in his countenance. He regretted that he had been prevented considering me his guest, by my falling into the hands of a higher authority; but still, should be delighted to render me any service I might please to command. Unfortunately, he said, Perroffski was not likely to leave anything for him to supply.

Dinner was served in the French style, but still some national dishes appeared. Perroffski asked many questions about India, and our late expedition. One of the general officers present asked, whether I had ever dined off elephant's heels: he had heard it was a common delicacy. I replied, that I was not rich enough to pay 100*l.* for a single dish, and had never heard of any portion of the elephant being eaten, excepting by the wild people of the forest.

After dinner, we adjourned to the armoury, where Perroffski has one of the rarest private collections in

the world, of ancient and modern arms. I took no notes of these, and therefore cannot particularly describe them; but, having seen many collections, I do not praise this at random. Amongst the blades were several, the recent fabric of Zlataoost, in Siberia. Without telling me their history, he asked my opinion of their water. I told him that it was particularly fine, but of a peculiar character. That the grain resembled that of blades forged at Siroee and Lahore, which, though keen-edged, I had generally found brittle. He said that the blades before me were perfectly elastic. The Colonel Anossoff, an engineer officer of great genius and merit, had discovered the art of damascening, and was daily improving upon the discovery. That he employed cast steel, to which he contrived to give an elasticity that could not be surpassed; and that every blade was subjected to severe proof ere issued from the fabric of Zlataoost. He took down an elegant ataghan, of fine water, and silver mounted, and begged my acceptance of it, as a specimen of Russian manufacture. In his judgment upon the water of sabres, I did not always agree with him. I have long and attentively studied the subject. The collection of daggers was singularly rich and curious.

He marvelled that my hand should be so long in healing. Had himself lost the tip of one of his fingers by a sabre cut; but the wound was healed in a fortnight, whereas mine had been nearly two months open. He insisted upon sending me his own physician, Dr. Rosenburgh. I took leave, and returned to my quarters, where he had sent me a supply of his own linen, which was very welcome. I had now some faint hope of shaking off the Schippish who, with a constancy rare enough in bosom friends, had clung the closer to me for my adversity.

The next day Perroffski again called, to see that I was comfortable, and to take leave of me. Our relative position was singular. He called me his

enemy; and circumstances had given him a right to hold me as such. Yet he treated me with the generosity and never-slumbering attention of a friend. I told him, I felt more honoured in one such enemy, than in a hundred ordinary friends. He said, that if he caught me at Khiva he would slay me. I replied, that if I suffered him to get there, I should deserve death. He placed at my disposal his cattle and equipages, and assured me he would never forgive me if I wanted for anything that Orenburgh could supply. I might possibly meet him at St. Petersburgh; but he thought it more probable that we should meet on the road. He begged me, in spite of my bitter enmity, as he was pleased to term it, to consider him as my friend. I parted from him with a regret, which the reader will readily comprehend. I account it no slight honour to have known Perroffski, and to have been deemed by him worthy of his friendship.

In the evening, I found that my noble host was not satisfied with all the attentions he had lavished upon me. He had called Pekoffski to him, and strictly cross-examined him as to any possible or probable want. He by this means discovered that I had attempted, without success, to procure a map of Russia, and he now sent me a magnificent map of the empire, insisting that I must accept it, as he had another. He had also found out that I had no watch, and begged of me to wear one of his, until I should arrive at St. Petersburgh. It was a beautiful time-piece, which never required winding! the motion of the wearer's body winding it up. It was the first of the kind that I had seen. He enquired whether there was any other way by which he could contribute to my comfort or convenience. I replied, that he might crown all his kind and generous attentions by a gift which I should value more than all, a lithograph of himself. He had none: but sent me, instead, a present almost too costly to be accepted, yet one that, under the circumstances, it was impossible to refuse. It was a

pair of bronze casts from the masks (taken immediately after death), of Peter the Great and his rival Charles XII., of Sweden. There were but two casts made from the original masks. The Emperor of Russia has one. I assured Perroffski, in thanking him for these most precious relics, that the Russian empire contained no gem that I should value more highly. That they should be preserved in my family as a sacred memento of the friendship and hospitality of Perroffski.

At night, these masks were lying upon a chair in my sleeping apartment. I lay down to rest, but the shades of the heroes hovered over me. A feeling of awe, too sacred to be disturbed, took possession of my mind. The spirits of the departed *had* taken a visible form in times past, if traditions were worthy of credit. There was, at least, no doubt, that the eyes of the Living had seen images, which deceived them into the belief that the Deceased stood before them. Often in my loneliness, in the darkness of the night, upon the hill side, the declivity of the chasm, or the rayless chamber of the tomb, I had imagined my fancy quite capable of such a flight, and almost expected to view the shapes of those whom the grave had severed from my side. Sometimes I had shrunk from the ordeal, and at other times had calmly awaited it. Now, I longed for it with earnest desire. I fancied that the sufferings I had undergone had, in a manner, given me the privilege of admission into the society of the mighty ones of other days. I was, at least, capable of appreciating their greatness, and of reverencing more deeply the tattered pall, which droops over their dust, than the banner which had waved at the head of their thousands. The sublimity of those moments is not to be expressed in words. I scarcely breathed, lest that muscular action should disturb the train of my thoughts; and when the impressions waned upon my fancy, I arose, opened the shutters, and let in upon the masks a stream of bright moonlight, by which, as

I hung over them, I long and earnestly perused those awful lineaments.

Oh! what were all the pomp of the ermined, and sceptred, and crowned monarch, compared with the silent majesty of those lifeless traits, which no passion shall again ruffle, no enthusiasm again kindle, no hope again illume. The spirits of the heroes have entered upon a new stage of being; they have plunged amid the throng that preceded them to the unknown shore. No longer are their powers to be estimated in conflict with minds, the growth of their own narrow cycle, but the great names of other days will be thrown into the balance; they will meet there with the glowing genius of Greece, the stern unconquerable will of Rome, the Punic champion, the Mogul hero, the uncounted host of the wise and valiant, scattered over a hundred climes. They have entered upon this new arena with no fortuitous advantages. The crown is fallen from their brows; the wand they grasp is no longer a sceptre, which millions watch with awe. The ground they tread is no longer elevated above the level of the minds around them; but they find themselves confronted with the obscure philosopher, the unsuspected patriot, the hero whose powers have been wasted upon the drudgery of the plough. Who shall say where their grade may be? Who can contemplate this second infancy of a mighty mind, without the intensest interest; or avoid, for the moment, identifying his own being with that of the adventurer in such a career.

The countenance of the Czar is massive, and full of power. The profile is great, though not noble. The nose aquiline, the mouth compressed. The forehead is high, ample, sinuous; one of the grandest developments I have ever seen. Let phrenologists comfort themselves with the assurance, that the organ of constructiveness, which taught Peter to mould into form this magnificent empire, is on a gigantic scale. A smile of firmness is upon the lips—the smile of one

superior in genius, as in station, to fellow men. In this posture did they settle for ever. In this frame did the great architect of a nation enter upon the untried world. My emotions almost overpowered me, as I gazed fixedly upon those lineaments, silently illumined by the lamp of night. This was not the sculpture of the living monarch, it was not even Peter in the hour of repose; but the Genius of the North, as death had surprised him, closed his eye and folded his wing. It was the mighty in the hour of his weakness, the conqueror at the moment of his overthrow. The strong in his languor, the proud in the vanity of his feebleness. The hero, the patriot, the legislator, the tyrant, resolved into a scanty heap of miserable dust.

And who is that beside him? Who would presume to approach his presence, or share with him the pillow of repose? He who taught him, by defeat, the path to victory. The dauntless, the magnanimous, the indomitable Charles. It is only possible to equal the contrast of these two masks by contrasting the minds of the rival kings. The face and head of Charles are smaller than those of a woman. It is difficult, at first, to believe they could ever have belonged to a man. The features, also, are not prominent; and the sole mark of power is in a compression of the lips, which is more than firmness, and amounts to obstinacy. All besides is smooth and delicate; and the countenance promises no more than intelligence, firmness, and promptitude.

I confess I was disappointed in this mask. Charles had been the idol of my boyish enthusiasm. His fearlessness, his spirit, his brilliant success, his love of hardship, his contempt of luxury, his heroic achievements, his indomitable spirit, lent a fascination to the page of his memoirs, which I found in no equal degree in any other. Now, as I placed the masks of the rivals in equal light, they would not bear comparison. I perceived, at a glance, that mind had triumphed over matter, animated by strong animal instinct.

That *self-denial*, which at first sight appears so noble, dwindles, as we gaze upon the features, into mere indifference. A want of animal appetite. That *courage*, with which he sustained such utter reverse, into want of sensibility. The spirit with which, as a youth, he set at defiance so many powerful monarchs, appears rather the consequence of a want of foresight, of capacity to understand the stake he was playing, than of a mind which rises superior to anticipated danger, and beards the lion with open eyes. The difference in size of the two masks is so great, that when Charles' is placed within Peter's, it is literally swallowed up. Yet Charles was, I believe, above six feet in height. The countenances are essentially national. Peter could not be mistaken for any but a Russian, nor Charles for other than a Swede or a Dane.

There is one particular in the mask of Charles which invests it with a solemn interest. The impression of his death-wound is there. That mysterious wound, still doubtfully attributed to friend or foe. I have not the masks here; but unless my memory deceive me, it is above the left temple. I gazed on it at that moment with thrilling emotion. It had not altered a line of the countenance. No languor, no convulsion was visible there. *There* was the firmness, *there* the intrepidity; they had not yielded to the power of death. I looked upon it, and discarded the report that attributes it to a companion in arms.*

I again lay down to rest, but I had placed the masks where I could view them from my pillow. It was not possible to be occupied long with that of Charles while Peter's lay beside it. I was now in the empire of this wonderful man; the stronghold of his glory, the spot of all the universe over which, if permitted, his spirit would still preside. I had entered it,—for what purpose? Would he stand in my path? Was his awful shade indeed present with me there, though unseen,

* See Appendix.

inspiring emotions seldom experienced in equal degree? These were questions that I loved to leave in doubt. I felt nothing wanting to the sublimity of that hour; not even the visible presence of the mighty genius to whose great representative my errand was addressed. I slept and I awoke. My dreams had been a chaos of great elements, but the genius of the spot had not appeared.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Ball-room at Orenburgh—Dancing—Perroffski's Prohibition—Captives at Khiva—Effect upon them of my Arrival—Preparations for renewing the Invasion of Khiva.

RIKKASOWSKI, we have seen, was all attention to him whom it pleased Perroffski to honour. He now invited me to dinner; and, for the first time since my arrival in Russia, I found myself at table with one of the fair sex. My delight was very great; for the lady of the house was really a charming person, and did the honours with much grace and propriety. On my expressing my weariness at so long a separation from such social intercourse, she promised to shew me the beauty of Orenburgh; and accordingly, two days subsequently, I found myself at a ball, at which attended the greater number of the fair ones of the place. My wounded arm prevented me from dancing, but there was sufficient enjoyment in contemplating a scene, to me the most fascinating in the world. I sat myself in a corner, and indulged in comparisons of the present with the past. I thought of the filthy black tent, the sheepskin garments, and their colonies, the buxom old lass of ninety-five, and her bon-bons; and again I fixed my eyes upon some graceful young creature, dressed like a lily flower, and moving like a breeze of spring, scattering delight wherever she came; and I asked myself, if these were indeed a reality, or some vision sent to tantalize me with the promise of impossible happiness. So slowly do fashions circulate from Paris through our Indian empire, and so long had I been banished from civilized society, that I mis-

took the dress for some Russian costume, and gave it my warmest admiration. In good sooth, I was dazzled as much as I was delighted; and although, I doubt not, my outward bearing was sufficiently demure, my heart laughed exultingly at the change which it had pleased Heaven to effect in my condition in the space of a few short hours.

The Englishman was, of course, rather a monster at Orenburgh. One or two of my acquaintance were anxious to know my opinion of all I saw, and whom I considered the most lovely of the group. Not reflecting that the judgment of a stranger on such occasions becomes authority, I incautiously gave utterance to mine. In an instant it was buzzed from ear to ear, until it reached her at whom it pointed, and who, I thought, did not lose anything of her charms for the blush with which she rewarded it. The circumstance was the more vexatious, because she was a married lady, whose fortune was made, and a very lovely girl was present, to whom, by all laws of courtesy, such a compliment was due. For an Englishman, and especially a banished Englishman, to think any women more lovely than the daughters of his native land is, of course, impossible. But the ball-room at Orenburgh did not want its full share of beauty. The ladies had no prudery, but were ready to converse without introduction, justly considering, as is too little considered in England, the presence of any gentleman at the house of their entertainer, sufficient guarantee for his respectability. I was unfortunately too little aware of this circumstance to profit much by it. The braiding of ringlets (to use an Hibernianism) was quite new to me, and I thought, and still think it a deforming fashion. The quadrilles, as is too generally the case in Calcutta, were played in jig time. The effect, of course, was very miserable. The grace of a Thalia would not stand the test of such barbarism. To me there is something so poetical, so harmonising, so heart-expanding (Dil kooshaud) in

the graceful movements of the dance, that, were I a legislator, I would cultivate and encourage the recreation, as the vehicle of moral refinement. But the dance should not be a slovenly crowd of indifferent and ungraceful shamblers; the one half too conceited, and the other too clumsy, to thread the mazes of the figure with decorum. Neither should the sounds which set them in motion be such as are played to parched peas for a similar purpose; they should be harmonious and in measured time, so that the mind and the feet should be swayed by the same impulse, and the dance, instead of fatiguing, should refresh and exhilarate both soul and body; and each performer, as he looked at the other, should behold the most noble of the works of his Creator in the most amiable and beautiful of its aspects.

A day was now fixed for my visit to the district. The carriage of Peroffski was placed at my disposal, in spite of many a desperate effort of mine to purchase; and had I permitted it, the same generous hand had paid all the expenses of my journey. Thus did the noblest and most generous of opponents (for I had come to traverse and disconcert the whole system of his ambition) lavish upon me the affectionate attentions of a brother. Much do I regret, that he prohibited the publication of the particulars of this trip; for I have nothing to say, but that which reflects honour on his country and people. And the gold and platina mines, and the fabric of of arms at Zlataoost, in Siberia, are objects of curiosity and interest to the whole world. Yet, despite this prohibition, must I for a moment dwell upon the graceful attentions, the frank hospitality, the kind offices of the Russians whom I met with in this journey; and the proof afforded me, that Russia has in the hearts of her children, even in the wilds of Siberia, ores more precious than the gold and platina of her Ooorahlian mines. I would a moment linger, in remembrance of the heartfelt happiness,

which, wounded, dispirited, worn out with suffering, mental and bodily, I enjoyed in my Siberian home. And, if the families of Anossoff and Niesteroffski, can at all forgive this public mention of their names, they will, I trust, pardon also the faintness of the tribute. The name, indeed, of Colonel Anossoff*, is public property, and well known in the world of science, which is under important obligations to him.

The few days I spent with these friends, have become an epoch in my existence. I wandered with them through the beautiful woods, that overshadow their artificial lake; I drove with them through the wide valleys of the Oorahl; where the rich green of the grass was almost lost, in the brighter tints of the wild flowers of Siberia. I explored with them the mineral treasures of the mountains, and I returned to their happy and peaceful abode, to learn the sports and amusements of Russia, or to hang breathless upon her rich and exquisite melodies, or to admire the strain of genuine poetry, which forms the burthen of her songs. And the Englishman, the stranger, became in a few hours an adopted member of the family, and each endeavoured to make him forget past suffering, and weary banishment, by the most graceful and affectionate attentions. My heart, in the abundance of its bliss, grew young once more. It resumed its existence at the point last marked, by the presence of kindred and the privilege of home. I forgot that my wound was open, my hand in a sling, my brain still liable to vertigo, at any sudden excitation. I was the wildest of the wild, aud often reminded of my condition, rather unpleasantly, by pitching head foremost to the earth, as I ran at speed through the garden, in chase of a play-

* Colonel Anossof, of the engineer corps of the imperial army, and master of the fabric of arms at Zlataoost, is the reviver of the art of damascening cast steel.

mate. I know not what those kind Russians thought of the Englishman. But I trust they do not regard him, as a specimen of his sober countrymen.

In the midst of all this enjoyment, my heart rebuked me for lavishing so much emotion upon any soil, but that of my birth. I felt a species of regret, that the freshness of the contrast between barbarous, and civilized existence should be taken off, ere I could reach England; if indeed such a blessing awaited me. And it was not without some cause that I felt thus: for upon my arrival in England, the reaction of the spirits was past, and there remained only a mind exhausted by watching, by suffering, by anxiety, by care; utterly incapable of enjoying those very privileges, which it had sighed to possess, during seventeen long years.

The unsettled life I led in Russia, prevented me from collecting, as I had desired, any number of her gems of music and poetry. The state of my hand did not admit of notes or of transcripts: so that my store is meagre, and ill selected. I shall insert here but one translation of a ballad, the music of which has often enchanted me. I will not do it the violence of a versification, and must apologize for any errors, into which my ignorance of the Russian tongue may have betrayed me—

When o'er the blue Ocean, mists are falling,
And melancholy broods o'er the gay heart,
Can Ocean shake off his cloudy mantel,
Will the mist vanish from the breast?
'Tis not a star, that shines o'er the wold,
On the plain a fire is burning,
At the blaze is spread a silken carpet,
On the carpet a Warrior reposes.

With a kerchief he presses his mortal wound,
And staunches the life-blood of a hero:
By the hero stands a stately horse,
With his hoof he is pawing the damp turf,
He surely is addressing the hero.

"Rise, rise, thou noble knight,
"Saddle, saddle thy faithful steed,
"I will serve thee with zeal and truth,
"I will bear thee to our land,
"To the father, the mother, the clansmen,
"To the lovely infants, the young wife."

Deeply sighed the noble warrior,
Heaves his broad chest,
His pale hands are falling,
His mortal wound bursts open,
Out gushes the hot blood:—
Then spake he to his steed—

"My steed, my steed, my noble steed,
"Companion of my fortunes,
"Sharer of my wanderings,
"Depart thou alone, to our country,
"Give greeting to my father, my mother,
"My sweet children, my clansmen;
"And say to my young widow,
"That I have espoused another wife.
"With her I have received in dowry, the wide field,
"The keen sabre was our go-between,*
"And the temper'd arrow laid me at rest."

From this very imperfect and unworthy translation, some idea may be gathered of the spirit of the ballads of Russia, expressed in a masculine yet melodious language, and married to some of the most touching of the daughters of song.

What follows is not Russian, and perhaps requires some apology for insertion at this place. But, it is always easy to skip over poetry if it be unwelcome, and the prospect before me does not afford much hope of leisure or opportunity for the collection and publication of such trifles, in the usual form of a separate volume. I the rather publish it here, because I gave away a copy of it in Russia.

* Srakhal, a negociator of marriages.

To ———

I see thee, when my soul is glad,
  All radiant in thy youth's array;
A sun-gleam in a fairy glade,
  Unfolding each coy flower of May:
And as, where'er thy light steps play,
  Hope germs, and peace and promise spring;
I hear my raptured spirit say,
  "O Beauty is a joyous thing!"

To live, to move, to think, to feel,
  As beauteous creatures feel, think, live:
'Mid thoughts and acts, all grace, to steal
  Through the fair world, as formed to give
Delight alone; and e'en derive
  From Discord' self an added string
Of harmony. Hopes, joys deceive:
  But, *Beauty* is a blissful thing.

I see thee, in another hour,
  When, o'er my soul dark shadows grow,
A fair, but ah! how fragile flower,
  Bent, e'en by gales that gentlest blow.
O'er all, Decay his dust shall throw:
  O'er Bright and Dark shall gloom Death's wing:
And thou?—Avaunt dire shapes of woe!
  O Beauty is a mournful thing.

I see thee, when, o'er Nature's dust,
  The snowdrop, first-born flower, is springing
When streams their icy fetters burst,
  And to the crash, rocks, woods are ringing:
And hope, o'er Death her anthem singing,
  "A balsam blooms for every sting!"
Time's wither'd arm the dart is flinging;
  But, *Beauty* is a deathless thing.

I see thee, when the Voice of Night
  O'er the hushed gale is fainting, dying:
Then gushing, with a fountain's might;
  The echoes of past joys replying:
And o'er her First-born's urn is sighing,
  Young Hope:—and stars delight to fling
Their tender beams, around *thee* vieing:—
  O Beauty is a hallowed thing.

And ah! in visions of the Night
Whom, whom doth Fancy paint, but Thee!
Least mortal then: thy Beauty's light
Like Hesper's, o'er the empurpled sea
Of Siren-haunted Italy!
Lend, lend, sweet Dreams, your spirit-wing!
Of Heav'n ye breathe; to Heav'n ye flee!
And Beauty is a heavenly thing.

On returning from this journey amongst beautiful scenery, and objects of extreme curiosity and interest, I found a letter from Perroffski to General Rikkasowski, in which the writer expressed his prospect of returning immediately to Orenburgh, and his wish to meet me at St. Petersburgh, if possible, and, therefore, begging me to hasten to the capital. I was not tered of Orenburgh; yet, it may be readily believed, was not sorry to resume my route northward. I had sent through Perroffski a letter to my friends in England, briefly narrating my escape and well being; and this letter providentialy reached them before any of the reports of my death, with which, immediately afterwards, the public prints were filled. My most embarrassing concern regarded the disposal of my people. As my return to Orenburgh was extremely improbable, I wished them to be sent to Astrakhan, and there embarked for Astrabad, and Perroffski had promised so to dispose of them; but his absence rendered the measure for the present impracticable; as in the thousand distractions which occupied him at his departure, he had forgotten to issue the necessary orders, and the hearts of my unhappy people died within them. Their position at Orenburgh was extremely irksome and disheartening to them. They were not allowed to converse with Asiatics. They understood neither the habits nor the language of Russia, nor had an idea of the geography of that part of the world. To leave them under such circumstances was very miserable. To take them all to St. Petersburgh was impossible. I had not funds for

the purpose, and it rendered their return to their homes doubly difficult. I greatly regretted, threfore, having suffered them to accompany me to Nuovo Alexandrof, instead of insisting upon their return at once by Khiva to Heraut. Nothing, however, could now be done: for Rikkasowki could not act without distinct orders from Perroffski. I therefore gave each a sum of money sufficient for all expenses back, and desired Summud Khaun to divide amongst them whatever had escaped the hands of our spoilers, or been since returned.

Their quarters lay at some distance from mine, and next door to a large building, in which upwards of a hundred of the captives of Khiva were confined. These men, by some means, got intelligence that I had come to Russia to effect their release: so that, as I passed their prison, they thronged the windows and doors to gaze upon me and salute me. My promise to Perroffski prevented me from even returning their greeting with a look; but my servants sometimes met them, and then much courtesy was interchanged. Poor fellows! my hope of effecting their deliverance was not very sanguine, but I had no cause for despair, and their interest in my movements would have inspired me with fresh zeal, had I needed it. During the day or two left for preparations I made some calls, and occasionally wandered in the evening in a dense grove on the further bank of the river; the spot is full of interest. On the high bank on the hither side, Perroffski is erecting a new palace, which will be a fine building, commanding a happy view. Of the buildings of Orenburgh generally, I have little to say: many are of wood. The finest is the staff office, which occupies a side of the principal square. The square, on Sunday evenings, presents a delightful spectacle—the entire female population of Orenburgh in holiday attire. The effect is that of an immense flower garden, every blossom of which is instinct with life. The town is generally neat; far beyond the

usual pretensions of towns so distant from the capital. The population has been estimated at 2268.* I should have made it three times that amount. Its position, on a very unsettled frontier, is important, and it is one of the avenues of commerce with Tartary. I found that every preparation was on foot for a renewal of the invasion the ensuing year. Reconnoitering and surveying parties occupied the ground to be passed, and troops were marching down to supply casualties in the army. At the same time, not so much reliance was to be placed upon the information I could collect; ignorant as I was of the language, and instructed as were all I met, to give me a particular view of the subject. The utmost estimate of the late invading force did not exceed 10,000. But at Orenburgh, arrangements were doubtless made for following up this vanguard, and taking possession of the country, as it was conquered. The idea of my mission succeeding was derided by the most intelligent. It had become, they said, an imperative necessity to complete what had been begun. Otherwise, the Kirgheeze of the southern steppes, the Bâshkirs of their own territories, an unsettled Muhummudan tribe, and several other disaffected clans would rise against the Government. I had my own thoughts, but said nothing. I found here an English civil engineer, setting up a steam engine for supplying the town with water. Several others are buried in the Eastern parts of the district. It is a custom of the Russians to employ Englishmen to set up their engines; and when these are set in motion, to discard the English for a German engineer, who receives smaller wages.

* Schnitzler—Tableau Statistique.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Departure from Orenburgh—Samara—Summud Khaun, a sample of the Afghaun Character—Travelling in Russia—My very limited Means of ascertaining the Condition of the People—Despotism a necessary Evil in the present Constitution of Russia—Prisoners of Khiva—Vladimir—Deformity of ecclesiastical Architecture in Russia—Face of the Country—Forest—Arrival at Moscow—Impressions—Trimness of Moscow.

TAKING leave of Orenburgh, I once more mounted the travelling carriage, with youug Pekoffski as my companion. General Perroffski had volunteered to permit his services, and sundry reasons induced me to approve of the arrangement, although not fond in general of travelling in company. In the first place, I esteemed and liked Pekoffski, and knew that I was pleasing him, in carrying him with me; and in the second place, being aware of the cautious system of the Russian Government, I thought that Perroffski might incur censure if he suffered me to travel alone. Otherwise, much more is gained by solitary wandering; and it is the only chance the traveller has of picking up the language. I feel also less master of my mind when a fellow-creature is constantly at my elbow. In short, a companion disturbs my enjoyment, whilst he prevents me from exerting myself for my own comfort, and of course, from seeing and learning anything of national peculiarities. The country from Orenburgh to Samara is a steppe, covered with the richest pasture; the ground slightly undulating. It afterwards becomes a little more diversified; but as I could not take notes, my remem-

brance of features is not very distinct. At Samara we crossed the magnificent Volga, which, take it all in all, though far less grand than some of our Indian streams, is the most beautiful river I have seen. It is here of great breadth, about half a mile, although Samara is 800 miles from its estuary. The colour of the water is a dull red, such as it might receive from iron clay. The right bank rises into woody hills; on the left, stands the white and pretty town of Samara, with a variety of small craft anchored at its foot. The depth of the water was considerable, and I observed no symptoms of great and sudden increase or diminution of volume, such as the banks of Indian rivers exhibit.

The Volga is, in one respect, the most wonderful river in the world; for it is navigated from its very source to its termination, i. e., a distance of about 3,000 miles, and connecting St. Petersburg by the most magnificent of highways with Astrakhan and Durbund; so that sturgeon are caught at Oorahlsk, floated down the Oorahl and up the Volga, and landed alive in the capital for the Imperial table; having travelled a distance of about 4,000 miles.

Samara was the first town upon this road, in the space of about 250 miles. I put up at the principal inn, where I was entertained by a musician, playing upon a species of lute having a dozen or more strings, and formed like the Seringa of India, although played by the fingers, and not by the bow. Nizaum had, until leaving Orenburgh, been constantly with me, and had accompanied me in my perambulation of the district; I thought it imprudent to carry any of my suite farther. But when I went to take leave of them, I found them so utterly disheartened at their forlorn position, in a land of strangers, that, after many objections, I yielded to their earnest solicitation, that one of them should accompany me. They thought I should be thus less likely to forget them. To take Nizaum farther, was inconvenient in the extreme. He con-

trived to sleep so soundly on the coach box, that the Russian servant who sat with him, and who owed him a grudge, threw over-board all his clothes one after another, and he returned in the most forlorn predicament. I thought, too, that he had had his share of sight-seeing; and that Summud Khaun might, if I could arrange it, return from St. Petersburg, with an order from government, and convey the whole party back to Heraut. Summud, although utterly useless to me as an attendant, excepting in guarding my despatches, when I for a moment removed them from my person, could take much better care of himself, and had his wits always on the alert. He proved to me a most vexatious accompaniment, and an enormous expence; but his strongly marked character, his immovable prejudices, his novel and ingenious estimate of causes and effects, afforded at times great amusement to others as well as to myself. And then Summud Khaun had the manners, and the feelings of an Afghaun gentleman of the lower class. And although he could not read, his mind was stored with anecdote, and quotations from the Persian poets, which he could apply with much effect. He would have been an interesting humble companion, could he have borne much notice. But having to look after him, and nurse him as if he were an infant, I found it difficulty to keep him in his place, without using a reserve, which was very contrary to my inclination, and a source, at times, of much bitterness to him. Summud Khaun was one of those queer compounds that are scarcely to be met with perhaps in Europe. Attached to his country and his people, fond of his children, faithful to his master, honest, good-natured, and hospitable; he was yet selfish to a degree, that could at times swallow up any, or all of those fine sentiments, and that never suffered their rivalry when they came strongly in competition. It was this selfish regard to his own safety, that utterly blinded him to the insanity of his

conduct, when he made our guide sole heir to my money; or, in other words, offered a premium for my destruction. The same selfishness on the field of strife, rendered him utterly indifferent to the condition of his master; and whilst Nizaum forgot his wounds, and the blows actually falling upon his head, to weep over me, Summud Khaun was repeating his articles of faith that he might not be mistaken for me. I might multiply instances, but it is an ungrateful task. I had rather dwell upon the other side of the question, and remember his persistence in the determination to follow my steps, to what he considered inevitable destruction, when I urged him to leave me and return to Khiva. This was the man, acting upon the high toned sentiments of fidelity, which are to be found in his country, and to which he could adhere, until flesh and blood got the better of mind.

Summud Khaun was, in fact, a favourable sample of the Afghaun character, and I have taken thus much trouble in his delineation, because I am painting, not an individual, but a nation, until lately but little known. He was an Afghaun, as true a child of Israel as can to this day be found in Jerusalem. The same his pride in family and nation, his inveterate prejudice, his obstinacy, his self-sufficiency, his abstract love of noble sentiments, his want of disinterestedness to give them application. He was one of those who had stood in Heraut a siege of ten months, against an army of 40,000, and a powerful artillery, something of an approximation to the siege of Jerusalem. And he was one of that nation, who are to this day, after fifty contests, less subdued than ever, yet of whom any one can be bought, by golden arguments, to sell his brother or his king.

Travelling in Russia, to one careless of food and luxury, is more pleasant than in England, or in France. The sky above, is generally serene in summer; the heat is seldom excessive. The roads are oftener good than bad, and, although the carriages are

not so easy as our post chaises, yet the horses get over the ground in better style than the horses of either France or Italy. There are some especial annoyances, however, and one of these is detention at the post houses, which often exceeds an hour; the other is the system of harnessing horses three, four, or five abreast, by lashing a pole on either side to the splinter bar. Of course the outer horses amuse themselves throughout the journey, with sending into the traveller's face, huge clods from their heels, of clay, mud, dung and other raw materials, of which the carriage is chock full at the close of the stage. If the road be very dry, dust is the principal of the donations. Now, as I had four persons in the vehicle, beside luggage, I could not get on with fewer than five or six horses, which were harnessed three abreast, and thus, on reaching the dusty and more beaten road, I was obliged to alight at every post house to wash away the dust of that stage. The vehicle also being open, extremely long in the pole, and low in the wheel, the dust of the front wheel, when the body reached it, was just high enough in the air to curl into the vehicle. It will be readily believed that I do not speak of this portion of the road when I couple it with pleasure. It was scarcely endurable, but, in a chariot, I should have escaped nearly all this pillory. I am rather alluding to my excursion into the district, over smooth roads, little travelled, and generally moistened by showers.

At the entrance of each Russian village, stands a large cross, often bearing the effigy of Jesus Christ. The cross has, at the point where the feet were nailed, a small cross-bar, which is fixed obliquely. The Russians believe, that one foot was elevated above the other. There is often, in addition to this cross, a kind of altar, or covered stand, containing images of the Virgin Mother, etc., and also standing on the road side at the entrance.

On entering the village, a stranger is struck with a

number of little pictures, of which each house has one at the corner, of some implement for extinguishing fire; one is a hatchet, another a bucket, a third a hook upon a pole, a fourth a ladder, etc. Each house is bound to keep up, and supply on demand, the instrument of which his house bears the picture, and the most illiterate can tell, by a glance at the picture, what he is to demand of the owner of each several house. This precaution is the more necessary, that the houses are constructed almost universally of wood; towns alone containing buildings of masonry. These wooden houses are sold in the market, ready made; I mean, that they are carried bodily thither for sale, all the parts being numbered. The walls are of trunks of trees, squared inside, and planed at their junction, piled one above the other, and braced together where the ends cross. No material affords so wide scope for picturesque effect in architecture as wood. It was pleasant to see the horses at a canter or gallop, whenever there was no actual ascent. As for descents, they rattled down them at speed, and we were more than once in imminent danger. This, with an open wound, was no pleasant prospect, yet I balanced the pleasure of the dash against the chance of losing altogether my right hand, and, as to communicating caution to a Russian postilion, I soon gave up so preposterous a notion.

All day we travelled over the flowery steppe, or through the beautiful forest, illumined by the sun; at night our progress was not arrested, nor was it necessary to draw over us the hood of the vehicle. The sky was soft, the dew no more than was refreshing; the planets held converse with me whilst my companion slept. We were traversing the wildest country, yet I had not taken the precaution of carrying pistols. We met the wandering Bashkeers, pasturing their flocks in the forest, felling trees, or making charcoal: their tents were the spangled canopy. We saw the black tent of the Tartar pitched upon the

steppe, but we dreaded not in him the seller of human flesh. At the distance of 1,500 miles from the capital, I felt securer, at midnight, in the thick gloom of the forest, than ever I have felt in walking the streets of London at the same hour, or indeed in any part of England. This is one of the *per contras*, in summing up the benefits of high civilization; but there are others which need discussion.

My companion, not being a Russian, could not give me that insight into the condition of the peasantry in which I felt so deeply interested. A traveller sees amongst them only the elements of peace and contentment. He finds them dwelling upon the richest soil in the world, in the midst of abundance, in comfortable houses, and a land still large enough for its inhabitants; he perceives that they are exempted from two of the fears that embitter life in more civilized lands, fear of want, and of robbers; he finds them healthy, stout, well-clad, civil to strangers, and hospitable. It is not in a cursory tour that we can look behind the curtain of the mind, and pronounce whether or not they are content; whether the degree of knowledge they possess is not too great for their degree of freedom; whether *that* right has discovered to their minds so much of its preciousness as that the treasures of the world, without it, were worthless and vile; whether their present sufferance proceeds from indifference, or from a spirit long cowed by submission, that thirsts, but dares not struggle for its rights. This is a knowledge to be acquired only by years of intercourse with them.

As for myself, I had not even the means of ascertaining how far the mere physical advantages and disadvantages stood in the balance; whether the labour, and the military duties exacted from them, were more or less than paid by food, shelter, clothing, and protection; whether the intervals of rest allowed were sufficient for recreation and enjoyment; whether the penalties were inordinately severe, or regulated

by the measure of mercy. On all these subjects I have heard opinions, and might venture an opinion of my own. But I might, in doing so, be adding only to the mountain of prejudice under which superficial observation is so apt to bury truth.

One broad fact is sufficiently evident. That, however vassalage and slavery may be out of place in all imaginable conditions of society, a despotic government is the only system* that could hold together the mighty empire we are considering; the only form by which the inhabitants could be protected, and order and security be ensured. The langour that embarrasses divided counsels may be more than counterbalanced in a small and highly civilized state by the vigour and elasticity every member of that state derives from a sense of freedom, and an identity of his own with the interests of his native land. Nay, that very langour, which is so often observable in such states in their foreign policy, may, as in the nervous action of the heart, be necessary to the well being of the community, where the vessels are large, the limits restricted, the circulation uninterrupted, the body, from its very fulness, accessible to inflammatory disorders. Imagine the power of such a kingdom as Great Britain, its skill, its knowledge, its wealth, its courage, its enterprise, its hardihood, wielded by one able hand. Where would such a forked thunderbolt terminate the terrors of its course? Assuredly only in the ruin of itself, or the devastation of the entire world.

Again, imagine the vast but ill-compacted system of Russia suddenly deprived of the vigorous control of a despotic hand, and subjected to the dilatory, crawling, contradictory, feeble authority of a board, in which force nullifies force, and wit cancels wit, and only dulness is without counterpoise. How shall a

* It is to be remembered, that this relates to a people ignorant and unacquainted with the very nature of liberty. Where the people are instructed, as in America, a commonwealth may be vigorous.

force, barely sufficient to overcome the *vis inertiæ* of the matter that engenders it, make itself felt through the almost endless ramification of channels by which it must flow to pervade the empire? How shall the authority of such a force control the peoples dwelling at the distance of two years' march (for an army) from the capital?

That a despotism *can* effect this we see. That a limited or a republican Government could *not* we are certain, any more than either could suffice for the discipline of an army. In highly civilised communities, order is as much the consequence of common consent as of the laws instituted for its preservation; for the point at which the interests of all concenter has in such communities been ascertained. But an imperfectly instructed people resembles a military community, of whom duties are exacted, in which not an individual of the body feels personal interest. I must here pause, lest in venturing upon a discussion, which has formed the study of many an abler head, I repeat for novelties accepted maxims, or fall into errors inseparable from partial investigation.

It was, I think, at Sinbirsk that, as we drove past the prison, after halting an hour at the inn, we saw another squad of the unhappy captives of Khiva, thronging the windows to gaze at and salute me, having, by some means unknown to me, got intelligence of my arrival, and of the purport of my journey. I was much touched by this incident.

At Vladimir I first fell in with the imaginary route of Elizabeth, as she journeyed alone and on foot to plead the cause of her father. That tale, than which fancy never imagined a more lovely, had been my study at Khiva, and had given me an interest in each spot visited by the ideal heroine, as vivid as if she had been a character of history. Vladimir is situated on a height, and visible, like several towns on this road, from a considerable distance. The ancient rampart has the appearance of being a natural mound,

slightly shaped by human industry. It is altogether a romantic and interesting site, and to the most musical of names unites many stirring memories in the history of the past. The beautiful river Kliazma washes its feet, bearing to the Volga its various manufactures of canvas, cotton, leather, glass, and iron. The gardens are celebrated for the production of a transparent apple and for their cherries. The name Vladimir signifies gate of gold. The origin seems to be doubtful. Some affirming that its ancient portal was of that precious metal. Others, that it was so called for its splendour. The arch is standing, but not to strike with admiration any modern traveller. I passed under it. Vladimir is the ancient capital of this part of Russia, and far older than Moscow. Handsome as it appears on approaching, from the number of its churches (twenty-five) which are seen clustered together on the hill, from a distance of many miles, I did not observe one of these sacred edifices that could be called handsome, or had any architectural merit. Indeed, throughout the villages and towns of Russia hitherto visited, the ecclesiastical architecture seemed to propose for itself a result the very contrary to that of other lands, viz., the production of the worst possible effect at the greatest possible cost. The churches are numerous; speaking of the former influence of the clergy, weakened by access of knowledge to all branches of the community but themselves. I put up here at a decent inn, and after an hour's rest resumed the journey.

The road, after passing the Volga, had increased in interest. The general aspect of the country was undulating. Often we came upon villages most happily situated in valleys, and once we passed some well wooded hills by a steep and difficult road. The soil was generally a rich dark clay, receiving its colour, in all probability, from the debris of former vegetation. The rivers were always fine streams, and some of the views back upon the Volga were extremely

beautiful; for at Samara it winds like a serpent around the forest and the hill. But half the journey was always made at night, so that my remembrance of towns and features is often indistinct, and I had no means of taking notes of even that which I had seen.

After leaving Vladimir we entered a dense forest of cedar, birch, oak, beech, and fir; a forest stretching in one direction for sixty miles, and accompanying us to within a stage or so of Moscow. This forest has no very good reputation, and had the preceding year been the scene of several murders. I saw crosses erected to commemorate the events. We, however, passed unmolested, and toward midnight had reached the outer barrier of Moscow. The suburbs were lost to me in the darkness, and the country being quite flat, there was, after emerging from the forest, nothing to impress the fancy preparatory to admission into this celebrated capital. We were detained a full hour at the barrier, which gave me leisure for reflection.

Need I tell any Englishman that has ever heard the name of Moscow, how associated in my mind with venerable and antiquated images the idea has ever been. How, in reading of the Kremlin and the Kittye Gorod as fortresses appertaining to Europe, but rescued, time out of mind, from the hands of shepherd kings, I have pictured to myself towers and minarets, and domes, of the simplest and rudest structure, harmonizing by a species of native elegance, softened by time, with the people, the manners, the memories of far off days. When to these antique associations had been added the glorious sacrifice made by this venerable capital to secure the liberty of the land—

> When Moscow, phœnix of Sclavonia's fame,
> Lighted her funeral pyre, and fann'd the rising flame.*

* Relic of an illuminated poem, which not only saw the light, but felt it.

A deed so heroic, belonging to the times when virtue was an honour and patriotism no reproach, connected Moscow still more closely with the hallowed past. Now, a little reflection might have assured me, that the young phœnix is ever a little fresher in plumage than the worn-out bird. But as it had never entered my mind that I should visit Moscow, every prosaic particular had faded therefrom, and only those pictures were left, upon which the fancy delights to dwell. Now, as I sat in the carriage, waiting the propitious moment of complete awakening of the majestic ensign on guard, interrupted, as it was, by endless rubbings of the eyes, immeasurable expansions of the *fauces*, ecstatic straitenings of the knees, cosy scratchings of the head, luxurious rollings from beam-end to beam-end, removals of the night-cap, replacements of the same; beatific visions, half brandy, half love; relapses, revokes, hesitations, resolutions, starts, snores, appeals to the devil, etc., etc., etc., I was figuring to myself lofty antiquated houses and narrow streets, filled with the gloom of ages. Old Gothic windows and Chinese balconies, and a population of tall, fine, bearded men, in cloaks of diverse hue, marching solemnly through the twilight streets; whilst the huge bells from towers and steeples buried in the clouds were flinging their impressive music to distant lands.

I looked around me. Two or three miserable lamps revealed to me a low, modern guard room, filled with modern soldiers, reeking with modern tobacco smoke, and ancient spittle. I listened. It is a solemn thing to listen, without, to the hum of life of a large metropolis. The waves of the sea have a soul-arresting voice, but the waves of human existence are far more eloquent. The one appeals through sensual emotions to the spirit of man. The other is, as it were, a breeze ruffling the spirit. I confess I was at present disappointed. A rumbling there was in the midnight street; but it was the rattle of quick-going,

empty-gutted cars, bumping along, giddily, over pavements, ungifted with the fat and ancient mud, proper to so solemn a city. Half a dozen school-boys, driving wheel-barrows filled with empty canisters, had created a sublimer din. I thought of that ocean roar of existence which I had listened to on approaching London—that Babel of ten thousand sounds, fused into a single deep-toned dissonance—as if the floods had found an unwonted channel through some mountain chasm, and were hurrying to destruction rock, tree and shrub, and the persons, and the hopes, and the dwellings of man. A sound that had in it something appalling to the stranger preparing to plunge a forlorn drop into that mighty tide. I had not anticipated such a hoarse, impetuous sound as that: but I expected something solemn, stately, suiting the history and the character of the ancient metropolis of Russia.

The barrier was removed. The chaise entered and rattled through the streets of the city. The dim lights of the lamps fell upon low, trim, modern buildings, freshly stuccoed and white-washed. These grew in height as we proceeded, but they grew also in smartness and regularity. I gazed around me in despair. We soon reached one of the principal squares. All here was handsome, open, worthy of a great capital, but not worthy of Moscow. I would have given something to have seen a chipped cornice or a notched angle. It would have afforded at least the hope, that at some distant day, all I saw might become ruinous and venerable. But my eye sought such an accident in vain; and I believe, that if it were *suspected* to exist in the imperial city of Moscow, the whole police of the empire would be in a state of hubbub. After a long search for an hotel, which I could not find, I put up at a very good house, the Hotel de Paris, if I mistake not its title.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

General Plan of Moscow—The Kittye Gorod—The Kremlin—Their Architecture — Antiquity of the Kremlin — Monstrosities — Bronze Statues of Minine and Pojarski—Superstitious Observance—Great Bell—Treasures of the Kremlin—Polish Standard—How unworthily Treated—Sabres—Crowns—Thrones—Jewels—Eyes—View from a Tower of the Kremlin—Kremlin.

MY first care, the ensuing day, was to call upon the governor of the Kremlin, and present my note of introduction. He was not home, but answered the note by a polite message, which his aide-de-camp, a gentlemanly and obliging person, brought me, offering me permission to visit the curiosities of the Kremlin. I accompanied this gentleman accordingly: but ere we enter this time-honoured fortress, it may be as well to give a few hints upon the structure of Moscow.

The shape of Moscow is almost a lozenge, lying N.E. and S.W. In the centre of this, an octagonal area is enclosed by a second line of rampart or wall, and this area is more properly the city: all that is beyond being a mere suburb, laid out in gardens, etc., but pretty densely inhabited. Within this octagon, inclining northward, a third area is walled off by lofty ramparts, in figure a very irregular hexagon. This is the Kittye Gorod, or Chinese city. Its southern wall is washed by the small river Moskva, and forms the southern barrier of the Kremlin also, which is a fortress of nearly triangular figure, within the Kittye Gorod; and is in fact the nucleus, around which are described three circles of wall. The two outer enclosures are modern in style as

well as in fabric. The two inner enclosures, although really boasting no antiquity, are of an order quite unknown to Europe, and confined almost exclusively to Eastern Asia; being, in fact, peculiar to the Moguls. We are disappointed on discovering that they were built under Russian princes, by European architects. Their style has the simplicity of extreme antiquity; and to my eye they presented that effect the more strongly, because it was familiar with similar works in the dominions, and ascribed to the era, of Chenghis Khaun. The great peculiarity of this style is in the roof, which is a steep pyramid or cone, generally square, but sometimes octagonal. It is the termination of a square tower, and the undoubted origin of our Gothic spire. I have traced it in a line from Maandoo, the Ghiljie capital of Malwa, to Bukkur, on the Indus, over the graves of Timoor-Lungh's descendants; to old Oorgunj, the capital of Chenghis Khaun, and as far as Moscow. A monument shewing, like the pillars of Hercules, the limit to which were carried the Mogul arms. It is united with the arched portal and window; here in general circular, unless my memory fail me, but elsewhere of the pointed order. It seems to point distinctly to the source of the Gothic style, viz., the architecture of the Moguls, as distinguished from that of the Turks, and others of Tartar origin, to whom belong the cupola and dome. It is of an origin anterior to the latter, inasmuch as the pyramid is a simpler and older figure than the dome. It is quite unknown to the general Muhummedan architecture of India, but appears there as a monster occasionally, under the auspices of some descendant of the Moguls. The pyramid seems to have been in use by but three nations of antiquity, the Egyptians, Hindoos, and Moguls. But the last alone seem to have elevated it upon a base or tower. To judge by the existing dwellings of the Oozbegs or Moguls in Khaurism, this form of roof does not seem

to have been suggested by the roofs of their houses, which are not pent, but flat; and the figure is too steep for the roof of their black tent, which more resembles a dome. Yet it is remarkable, that at Maandoo the palace, having pyramidal roofs, is called Tubbaila Mhyle, or the tent palace, from the resemblance of its roofs to those of canvas tents; of the existence of which, formerly, in Toorkestaun, we have no evidence, although they have ever been a tented race.

The origin of self-supported roofs of masonry, of whatever figure, is generally to be found in countries destitute of timber. The dome of mud is common to Arabia and parts of Africa, where the sun's rays speedily harden the clay, and the aridity of the climate preserves it in shape. In the countries, and even in Afghaunistaun, domes of considerable diameter are built without mortar and without centering; about three courses of brick are daily applied, and the mud hardens as the work proceeds. Amongst the Hindoos, the roof of masonry is confined exclusively to religious monuments, and is evidently a modification of the simpler and severer, but less beautiful pyramid and obelisk of Egypt, where those figures were dedicate to religion, glory, and the grave; and where the object of the figure is the combination of mass or height with duration.

The most ancient notice we have of Moscow, and that is half fabulous, gives the Kremlin, the most ancient portion of it, an origin in A. D. 1147, as a village built of wood by Lourii Dolgorouki, father of Andrè Bogoloubivoi: taken soon after, and burnt by the Mogul Batu Khaun, and resuscitated in A.D. 1280. About A. D. 1485-92 the present walls of the Kremlin were built under Ivan Vassielièvitch III. (imagine the patience of the Russians to endure *three* such jaw-crackers) by two Milanese architects, Marco and Pièrro Antonio. The Kittye Gorod was founded in 1534, by the mother of the said jaw-breaker. If any

one would wish to remember the names of the six doors, here they are,—Sretenskoi, Troitskoi, Vsevsetskoi, Kosmodemianskoi, Vladirmirskoi, and Voskressenskoi. After repeating which, should he feel symptoms of tetanus, or lock-jaw, let him call upon the musically flowing streams of the Moskva and Neglinna. That the architects built from Tartar models, there can be no reasonable doubt; and perhaps the old Tartar fortress of Kāzān may have been their guide.

All this is to be considered as said on the route from my hotel to the Kremlin. I passed through handsome, clean, well-opened streets, to one of the gateways of the Kittye Gorod. Its aspect may be guessed from the discussion above. The wall is lofty and solid, and flanked at the angles by low square towers, with pyramidal roofs. Within was a continuation of the city, like the portion already seen, new, trim, and unobjectionable, with walls as white as lime, and roofs as red, or green, as vermillion or verdigris could make them. There is something excessively paltry in a pea-green or blood-red roof. No material, naturally applied to the purpose, is of such a colour. These are of sheet-iron, and paint is necessary to their preservation, and Russian taste is of the gayest. I longed to lend them a little honest tar; a more effectual, and a more decorous coating. The churches shot up on every side, in a deformity heightened by paint—harpies or the furies rouged for a ball. They were of all imaginable shapes, excepting those of elegance, and of all imaginable *dis*orders. It is really difficult to conjecture, whence so many frightful images could have been summoned, unless it were from brains disordered by the nightmare. One of them, called Vassili Blagennoi, my guide assured me, had been built upon the express proviso that it was to resemble nothing else on earth, and the success was triumphant. The architect had evidently consulted with old Nick, and stolen a hint or two from

Pandemonium. The nearest image I can find to represent the confusion of paltry ideas which the sight of this edifice begets, is a battle royal between pea-green onions, and red and yellow scorpions, writhing and tumbling together in a knot, reaching to the skies.

My kind friends the Rooskies must not be angry with me for speaking my mind upon this subject, but rather join with me, as with a friend, to uproot such an abominable taste, which disfigures a noble capital the more that the spires of Moscow are its most remarkable feature. A city, possessed of a site so graceful, an area so spacious, a fortress so magnificent and venerable, a name the most illustrious on earth, as Queen of Patriots, should be doubly jealous of any blemish that can detract from the sum of her fame amongst the nations. It is in vain to tell me it is a national style, for it is no style at all, the respect in which it most differs from architecture being the license given the builder to produce anything that cannot be condemned of grace, or be amenable to any rule or order. They might as well choose ugly wives, to preserve nationality of feature. If there be in these edifices any one element of beauty, let them rid it of its concomitants, and marry it with others at the altar of harmony. What, then, would you have them rattle down the three hundred churches of Moscow? No; but I would hire a regiment of chimney sweeps, to smear them with venerable dust. Then the stranger would regard them as monuments of a time before the Flood, and his disgust would be lost in curiosity; now that disgust is heightened by the absurdity of the painted vanity which vaunts them.

We were now in the principal Plâce of the Kittye Gorod, in front of the Spasskié Varota gate of the Kremlin. Here, at a fountain, are the bronze statues of Minine and Pojarski; the former awakening the latter to an effort for the liberation of Moscow from the Poles. The idea is happy, and the execution not

amiss. We approached the gateway, and I observed that my companions doffed their hats, and that all passengers did the same, although to this day no one can conjecture the reason. The rule is in great play here, and I have heard that the sentry sometimes enforces it. There is a city in Malwa called Nolye (the monkey). Now, it happens to be a name that cannot be uttered by a Hindoo before noon without risk of calamity. The inhabitants have, therefore, given it a second name, which it shares with the former; and if you ask them before noon what city that is, they will tell you, Burnuggah (the great city); if after noon, they will answer, Nolye. I thought this sufficiently absurd; but there was a reason for it. The Russians have lost theirs, yet continue the custom, and force strangers to comply with it.

We now entered the Kremlin, beneath a long and narrow vaulted road. The ascent commences with the gateway, and when it terminates, the visitor is elevated perhaps about one hundred feet above the site of the Kittye Gorod; but the tower of Ivan Velikoi rises still 225 feet above him. At the foot of this tower he finds the bell so celebrated for its colossal dimensions, the largest the world possesses, and quite worthy of its fame. It has been raised from the pit, into which it had fallen or sunk, and may be examined at leisure. So little is known of the past in Russia, that it is still a disputed question, whether this bell was ever suspended in a belfry, and broken by falling from its position, or whether the crack which has destroyed it as an instrument of sound is attributable to the sudden contact of cold water when it was heated by a conflagration of the city. It is, however, somewhat singular that it should bear an inscription, purporting to have been founded in part from the metal of a smaller bell, cracked in a conflagration. I therefore opine, that the tradition has been transferred from the older to the more recent bell, and that it has been cracked by falling from its scaffolding back into the

pit, in which it was cast. Some call in question the possibility of so enormous a mass being raised and hung in any tower, and above all, of its being effected by the Russians. But the process is a simple work of multiplication, and far less difficult than the casting of such a mass.

This bell has been frequently drawn and described, but, to save the trouble of reference, here are its dimensions:—

	feet.	inc.
Height to summit of cupola . .	16½	
Ditto total	21	
Diameter at base of cupola . .	12	4
Diameter at mouth . . .	22	8
Circumference ditto . . .	69	
Greatest thickness . . .	1	10

Weight in lbs. Avoirdupois.

By Jonas Hanway	12,327
By Mayerberg	320,000
By Corneille Leburn . . .	266,666
By inscription 10,000 pounds Russian, or	400,000
By a German 336 quintaux, or . .	33,600

The workmanship is handsome; it was cast in the reign of Anne, about 1737. It is said that much gold and silver were thrown by the pious into the melted mass, which required four furnaces. The same tradition exists respecting the enormous gun of Agra, which the barbarity of Lord William Bentinck destroyed; and it is probable that love of the marvellous has connected similar records with most of the remarkable masses of metal in the world.

Leaving this bell, we proceeded to the Museum of the imperial treasures. Beautiful as is the interior of this building, admirably suited as it is, in the abstract, to the purpose of enshrining the most costly and curious collection that the world can boast, it yet has no

business here in the Kremlin; for the architecture is Grecian, and produces the most discordant and paltry effect, surmounting a pile of the oldest, severest, and most original Gothic. It is the unhappy conjunction which Horace has vainly cautioned certain artists to beware of—the mare's body and maiden's head. No beauty in either can reconcile us to the inaptitude. But I shall have occasion presently to speak more of this.

The interior of this building is light and graceful, a series of well proportioned halls, connected by Roman arches. It is impossible to mistake it for less than a royal palace. In the first hall are reposited banners, suits of ancient armour, and a variety of ancient arms. Many of the panoplies are mounted upon figures of wood, some of which are on horseback. The effect is very good; and I thought, as I looked around that hall, that, were I monarch, this should be my chamber of repose. When the moonlight streams through the window upon these trophies of the past, giving motion as well as form to the lifeless images, gleaming from the armour, and dying in the silken folds of the banners, and flung from blade to blade of heroes who slumber in the dust, the scene must be perfect, and quite worthy of the spot, and of the memories proper to this haunted capital. In fact, it is a hall that should be visited only at the moonlight hour; *that* moonlight would also hide a token which Russia should bury from sight.

Amongst the trophies here displayed, I recognised the banner of the gallant and heroic Poles; and I stood long before it, wrapped in mingled emotions of indignation and pity. That any nation should be proud of a triumph so ignoble, did indeed seem sufficiently wonderful; but that the memory of it should be preserved and exhibited in *that* capital, which shares with Poland a kindred glory, argued a want of generous feeling scarcely credible in a great nation. Can Russia, the mistress of an army of a million soldiers, and a territory a hundred times larger than the hap-

less land of the Pole, find it in her conscience, in her pride, to boast of having, in concert with two powerful states, trampled that gallant nation in the dust? Or does she remember how nearly the Poles had shaken off the grasp of their gigantic tyrant? How, without treasure, without counsel, without material, their few but spirited legions bearded successfully the overwhelming myriads of Russia, and failed only from intestine divisions, of the most signal and brilliant triumph? Is it *this* memory which makes her exult in exhibiting the ill-fated banner? To have fought against overwhelming numbers is always honourable, even though the event should have been a defeat; but to triumph, with ten in your ranks to every one of the enemy's, is an acknowledgment of inferiority.

The Poles, who form the élite of the Russian army, what are their thoughts, when they see their glorious banner at the feet of a weak and effeminate monarch?* Are they of fear? Did they betray this weakness, when they so lately rode down the Russian ranks? Did they then measure bulk with bulk? Or did they not rather cast freedom, that sacred, that invaluable ore, into the balance against lawless force, accepting death itself as a makeweight, rather than forego the strife. Oh! believe me, Russia, the Pole who enters this treasury and sees there his banner, dishonoured by the hand of violence, will think of a bleeding country, will think of his trampled rights, will think of his ancient sceptre, will think of his father's sword. He will not think of fear, but of revenge. He will not think of trophies lost, but of deathless honour won. He will not think of the hard names *you* can couple with his bondage; but of the eyes of Beauty that glisten at his exploits, in a hundred foreign climes; the hearts of worth and valour that beat the quicker, when the name of Pole is breathed. He will not remember that the beacon fire is smothered; but

* At the foot of the picture of Alexander, a monarch who certainly did his best to be the *father* of his people. But it was a dead failure.

how often from its ashes it has sprung a phœnix into life. Yes, a phœnix, an immortal phœnix; such as we have seen in Greece, such as yet soars over the haunted ridge of Caucasus, bearing in his talons that thunderbolt—the Circassian sword. He will remember Byron's prophecy to the Greeks, when their cause seemed lost and hopeless as his own.

> . . . . Freedom's contest once begun,
> Bequeath'd from bleeding sire to son,
> Tho' often foil'd, is ever won.

But it is not only the brave Pole, who will kindle at the sight of his trampled banner. For every Englishman, every American, will involuntarily burst forth in those thrilling stanzas,* familiar to every child of freedom; graven on the memory and the heart.

Bury, then, this banner amongst the sacred dust of the Mighty. Hide from all eyes a silken rag, that

* Warsaw's last champion from her heights surveyed,
Wide o'er the scene a waste of ruin laid,—
O! Heaven, he cried, my bleeding country save!
Is there no hand on high to shield the brave?
Yet, tho' destruction sweep those lovely plains,
Rise, fellow men! our country still remains.
By that dread name, we wave the sword on high,
And swear for her to live, with her to die.

He said, and on the rampart's height arrayed
His trusty warriors, few, but undismayed;
Firm pac'd and slow, a horrid front they form,
Still as the breeze, yet dreadful as the storm.
Low, murmuring sounds along their banners fly.
Revenge or death, the watchword and reply.
Then peal'd those notes, omnipotent to charm,
And the loud tocsin toll'd their last alarm.
In vain, alas! in vain, ye gallant few
From rank to rank, your vollied thunder flew.
O! bloodiest picture in the scroll of time!
Sarmatia fell, unwept, without a crime;
Found not a generous friend, a pitying foe,
Strength in her arms, nor mercy in her woe,
Dropp'd from her nerveless grasp, the shatter'd spear;
Clos'd her bright eye, and curb'd her high career.
Hope, for a season, bade the earth farewell,
And freedom shriek'd as Kosciusko fell.

—*Pleasures of Hope.*

verily hath profited thee nothing! Let the noble Pole himself inter it in silence, or with solemn music, on one of those fields, so glorious to himself, where his heroes take their rest. This silent homage to a gallant foe, whose interests you should incorporate with your own; shall go farther to heal dissension, and soothe violated pride, than fifty more contests with this handful of the Valiant, the result of which you cannot foresee.

The remaining halls are filled with costly treasures, that cannot be enumerated. Gold and silver, agate and crystal vases; silver tables, jewelled goblets, rich and rare and jewelled arms; silver and gold plate of every imaginable variety; jewellery that has adorned empresses and kings; the greater part connected with historical records. The whole, most worthy of an imperial treasury. By far the most costly, curious, and kingly articles, are saddles, harness, and horse trappings, covered with jewels set in gold. The turquoise is the stone most generally employed: but rubies, emeralds, and diamonds also appear. The elegance and sumptuousness of this harness baffles all description. It is the gift of several Turkish sovereigns, to emperors and empresses of Russia.

A large collection of blades of different countries and ages, was not in sufficient order to be seen to advantage. The setting of many was rich and gorgeous, but I saw none equal in water to my own sabre. The farthest hall is occupied almost exclusively with emblems of royalty. Thrones and crowns, and maces of government. We are reminded, that we have not yet quitted Asia, and inclined to ask, what would be the display at St. James's, were all the thrones and crowns of the thousand Rajahs who are either subjects or tributaries to our queen, congregated there. The crowns are as follows:

Crown of Vladimir Monomarque—a gift from Alexis Comnenus.

—— of ditto ditto.

Crown of the kingdom of Kāzān.
—— of ———— Astrakhan.
—— of ———— Siberia.
—— of Joan Alexiovitch.
—— of Peter the Great.
—— of Catherine I.
—— of Peter II.
* —— of the kingdom of Poland.
—— of ———— Georgia.
* —— of Alexander.
* —— of Elizabeth, silver gilt.
—— sent by the reigning Emperor, silver gilt.
* —— of Marie Feodorovna, silver gilt.

Those marked with asterisks, were made for the funerals of the monarchs. The imperial globes and sceptres are often very beautiful, but I shall not enumerate them. Of all the jewels of royalty, these are the most exquisite. The thrones are the following:

Throne of Vladimir Monomarque
——— of Grecian fabric
——— of the Tsar Boris Fèodorovitch
——— of ——— Michael ditto
——— of ——— Alexis Mikhailovitch
——— of the Tsars Joan and Peter Alexievitch
——— of Poland, seized in 1831.
Ditto ———— Ditto.

I have taken the trouble to enumerate these, because at first sight, such a congregation of thrones and crowns, tends to exalt our notions of the imperial dignity, as combining in one, so many sovereignties. It will be seen, that of the crowns, only six belong to separate governmcnts; and of the thrones, there are but two of this character, viz. those of Russia and Poland. The display nevertheless is very grand, and we feel inclined to bend the knee before that wrecked and trampled throne, which we should have lightly regarded, had not misfortune, and persecution,

elicited therefrom virtues, which are a brighter ornament to it, than were the gems of a world.

If my reader expects of me a minute description of jewels and jems, he will be disappointed. I can admire such things when really beautiful; and these I have never seen equalled. But the impression is always transitory; and I could describe with much more zeal and eloquence, a certain pair of most lovely eyes, that lighted up the imperial treasures with a glory, that sooth to say, blinded me for the mere material objects before me. The rubies, the pearls, the sapphires, and brilliants, what are they, but the mere dust, of which nature forms the outer shrine of the still lovelier spirit of woman. Russia has cause to be proud of her daughters, whilst their beauty eclipses the treasures of the Kremlin.

The mass of rich articles here displayed, is beyond all example. The number of spacious halls is five. Their added length is about three hundred feet. Glazed cabinets are ranged around these, in which the treasures are exposed to view. These occupy the entire circuit of the five halls, and the least valuable article there, is a gem or a curiosity: the most part, of the precious metals. The eye becomes cloyed, and fatigued with the repetition of such rarities. We begin to look upon jewels, as dust; and upon pure gold, as dross. Indeed, no one should attempt in one day to explore more than a single hall. The gold of this collection, exclusive of that in the thrones and crowns, weighs 109lbs., and the silver 8,040lbs., but this is a most mean estimate of metal, worked with art and elegance, and forming the setting of precious stones.

The mere hasty inspection of this splendid collection cost me many hours. Baron Bodè, the governor of the Kremlin, joined me whilst engaged there. He spoke English with great ease and fluency, and shewed me those polite attentions, which

the really well nurtured delight to offer, to the stranger and the guest.

I climbed the tower of Ivan, and looked down upon the panorama of Moscow. The scene is the most singular in the world. The immense extent of this magnificent city, is uninterrupted by any of those obstructions, which, in England, are found in vapour and coal smoke. The air is clear as crystal, and every object is seen in all the brilliance of its tints, and in all the sharpness of its outline. Beyond the immediate mass of the city, wood and verdant herbage relieve the white walls of the dwellings; or rather enter with them into the happiest of contrasts. At a still greater distance, trifling hills, well wooded, break the flatness of the surrounding plain, forming beautiful sites for country villas. But the city itself is offensive to the eye of a painter; and to the eyê of a mere mortal, presents the strangest and most perplexing aspect. It is not a *city* spread beneath him, but a bleaching ground, where garments of every variety of shape and colour lie basking in the sun. He thinks at first that the good people of Moscow plant their gardens on their house-tops, and that all the bright green, pink, flaming yellow, and red hot red, that he sees in that unnatural situation, are parterres of peas, marigolds, crocusses, and peonies: whilst ever and anon, a church shoots up, through the gaudy carpet, its mass of deformity; looking like some overgrown scarecrow, or figure of Silenus or Priapus; red-nosed, yellow-gilled, and green-coated. In the midst of all these discordant and unpoetic colours and shapes, in which we seek beauty in vain; the eye delights to rest from its labour, on the simple and severe and antique outline of the towers and ramparts of the Chinese city; and from them is drawn nearer, by the sacred walls of the Kremlin, where at length it detects a single church, that can be perused without dismay.

I drove around the Kremlin, which I was never

weary of contemplating. From the South-east, the view is very grand. The vast pile of Gothic, surmounted by gilded domes and towers and spires; whilst the modern architecture of the interior is concealed by the walls. It is a most princely structure, and in some respects the world has not its equal. But the presence, within it, of Grecian fabrics, is a species of false taste, that appears incredible, even as we witness it. It is, as if we should build a Corinthian portico to our own Abbey of Westminster. The position of this imposing mass, in the very heart of the capital, and washed by the waters of the Moskva, is so happy, that I lamented the neglect of it in recent times. Every building within, should have been purely Gothic. The pile that might then have been commenced above the roofs of the highest houses, would have towered to the skies, and might have formed a most glorious pinnacle, to that antique and severely simple base. A base lofty, but not so lofty as to distort, by the foreshortening of perspective, the proportions of the superincumbent structure. At the foot of the Kremlin, on the West, are some pleasant gardens.

CHAPTER XL.

Intolerance — A Russian Church — Pictures — Reliques — Treasures — Deities—Theatre—Moscow—Departure by Diligence—Roads, etc.—Peasantry — Physiognomy — Novgorod — Floating Breakwater—Approach to St. Petersburg—Arrival—Call on the British Minister Plenipotentiary.

THE ensuing day, the aide-de-camp of the commander of the Kremlin, to whose obliging attentions I had been already so much indebted, called to escort me to the churches. My ideas become confused when I recollect this round of visitation; I scarcely know where or how to begin. Summud Khaun, the Afghaun servant, accompanied me, for I had not recollected that Christian churches were sometimes as intolerant as the Heathen, and would not suffer any one to explore their solemnities excepting those whom it can no longer greatly profit; inasmuch as their opinions are confirmed. I found that he was treated as if another than the Almighty hand had created—another Adam had begotten him; as if, in short, brick walls, raised by the filthy hand of man, could be desecrated by the intrusion of a living temple—the workmanship of the living God. I confess I felt for the moment degraded in my relationship to the human race, deformed and dishonoured by such foul uncharitableness; at the same time, I felt curious to enquire in what respects the religion before me transcended that of my faithful follower, who bows his knee to a Spiritual Being, without form or similitude, the Maker of heaven and earth, the Rewarder of good, the Avenger of evil. The reader shall be the judge.

Russia herself shall give the answer, for I delight not in such controversy.

My memory will scarcely enable me to delineate any particular cathedral minutely. I must, therefore, content myself with a general account of the figure and contents of such edifices.

We entered by a low portal, a series of cloisters, enclosing the main structure. These were painted from roof to floor with a variety of figures, the most remarkable of which were full lengths of the three several persons of the Trinity. These pictures, however, were but dim lights in comparison of those to come; and our guide crossed himself indeed, but carelessly, as we bow to an ex-king, or a minister whose party is out of place. A bow, that, literally translated, runs thus, "If ever you get your head above water, remember how civil I was to you when down."

After having been introduced to this group, we entered the main structure. This was lofty, and would have been spacious, but for the unhappy figures of the Greek cross, on which a superstition similar to our own, requires that all Greek churches be modelled. This cuts up the area into a variety of mean corners and compartments, and prevents the possibility of a fine effect from even the most magnificent dimensions. Every atom of the walls within is hung with paintings of saints and angels, in gilded or jewelled frames. Sepulchres and shrines of kings, and holy men, in a great variety of preservation, line the base of the walls. The lid of the most beautiful of these shrines being uplifted, presented to view the back half of an old scull, retaining the scalp and hair, excepting where either, or both, had melted away under the kisses of favoured devotees. One of the gentlemen accompanying me was invited by the priest, as the highest possible mark of favour, to take a kiss. It was evident to me, that a pair of ruby lips would have suited his fancy much better; and he certainly

was better fitted to the task of gathering the honey dew from such roses and carnations than the mould from a salted scalp. To refuse, however, would have brought upon him a charge of profanity, so he knuckled down, in full uniform, and stole a balmy kiss. On returning to my side he whispered, "We must humour prejudice." Poor Summud Khaun stroked his beard, told five beads at a time, and muttered in a tone between astonishment and horror, "Lah Hôl!" equivalent to Dominie Samson's "*prodigious!*" Had the young officer been kissing Summud's own wife, under his very nose, he could not have been more thunderstruck.

The most sacred of the recesses contained a shrine of silver, under a canopy supported upon columns overlaid with that precious metal; and in the adjoining apartment were hoarded the treasures of the Cathedral, consisting of altar cloths, worked in pearls by the hands of empresses, and archduchesses; jewels presented by emperors, princes, and grandees; chalices, etc., of silver and of gold. The wealth thus accumulated was often considerable; probably a single well-endowed church might be worth, in gold and jewellery, 20,000*l.* When Moscow was entered by the French army, all these goods were carried to Nijni Novgorod, and thus preserved from the hand of the spoiler. The priests could not speak either French or Latin, so that I could not converse with them. They were very polite, and at pains to exhibit and explain every thing. Amongst other curiosities was a picture of the Virgin Mary, by the Evangelist Luke, who, it is to be hoped, was a better physician than painter. The complexion was nearly black; and I was informed by my guide that such works of art are considered holy, in proportion as the complexion approaches that of Negroes.

The interior of the Russian churches is very highly decorated, as may be gathered from what I have already said; but there are seldom any paintings,

amongst the numberless pictures hung around the walls, deserving of separate consideration. It is a very common practice, to cover with gilt, silver, or copper, the whole of the picture, excepting the face. The toy thus produced, although it has no pictorial effect, is sometimes pretty. Another deforming custom, is that of encircling with a flying hoop, the heads of saints and deities, lest any ignorant, but devout pilgrim, knuckle down to Cleopatra or Jezebel, instead of to the Virgin Mary.

In another of the churches I was desired to remark, that every cupola contained, in regular gradation, according to the supposed rank of his Godhead, the full lengths of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The pious must excuse the mention at full length of names. It is superstition and not piety, to grudge the utterance of evil, in order to the eradication of error; and the religion of that man is of little value, who dares not bring it to the test of son, and of common sense; or who thinks that the Deity can receive offence from anything but the evil disposition of the heart. In this church, curtains were raised at each several doorway, in order that I might gaze upon the sacred paintings; and ever and anon, my companion stepped forward, and kowtowed before some holy relic or picture; whilst old Summud Khaun, with his turban in one hand and his eye-brows halfway up his bald pate, uttered "Lah Hôl!" and told his beads, determining more than ever, not to run the slightest risk of being brought to such a pass, by sipping the essence of the unclean beast.

But it is time to quit the churches, which indeed had little attraction for me, excepting as developing in broad strong lines, one of the mysteries of the human heart. Nothing, that I have seen amongst the Hindoos or Boodhists descends lower upon the scale of reason than this; and yet, over all, the divine spirit of Jesus has shed a softening radiance, that gives to the practical morality of the Russians an infinite

pre-eminence over the purer worship of the Muhummedan world; even as the gold tarnished and defaced, holds a higher rank than the burnished brass. The intolerance that has crept like a toad or a viper into almost every sect calling itself Christian, belongs to man's perverted nature, and not to the holy precepts that religion instils. But the religion of him of Mecca *preaches* intolerance, the most unpardonable of crimes, in the sight of that Being who is love.

I visited the imperial theatre at Moscow. It is a large and somewhat inelegant building; for harmony of proportion is not yet understood in this land. The interior is handsome, and the acting far from indifferent; I did not think much of it at the time, but have since seen worse at some of our first theatres in London. In the ballet, were two really fine male performers; but the more elegant was evidently not the favourite. The piece was the "Sylphide."

The display of thick ancles was carried to an unfeeling extent. I suffered night-mare in consequence. There was also a woeful dearth of beauty on the stage, and the spectators did not exceed one hundred and fifty. A farce, which succeeded, was extremely well acted. The Russians have a great deal of native humour, and eclipse us in this department of comedy. I had good opportunity of making the comparison, having seen the same farce performed at Moscow and at Covent Garden. At the former admirably, at the latter execrably.

The streets of Moscow are neat, clean, and orderly. It contains not a building, excepting the Kremlin and the defences of the Kittye Gorod, worthy of notice in an architectural point of view. But the houses are generally handsome, and the offensive colours of their roofs are not so obtrusive in perambulating the streets. A confectioner's shop which I visited, I thought better arranged than anything of the same kind in London or in Paris; and at a bookseller's I found an

extensive assortment of French, as well as Russian, works. I had no fair opportunity of judging of the beauty of the women. Two or three faces I saw of eminent beauty; but I should judge that there was in these a mixture of foreign blood; which I say, without any idea of disparaging the beauty that is purely Russian. A visit of two days to so extensive a capital could, of course, give me little idea of its resources. Perroffski's desire that I should not miss him at St. Petersburg, which he expected immediately to quit; whilst it had prevented my following the more interesting road by Kāsān and Nijni Novgorod, so it now caused me to hurry away from Moscow. Hitherto I had travelled post. I now took places in the Diligence, and looked forward with some horror to the confinement. I found the change, however, most welcome and agreeable. For the Diligence horses are always in attendance at the stages; so that not more than half an hour is lost at each post house; a wonderful feat in Russia; and whereas I had been literally half buried in dust hitherto, I was now completely exempt. The seats were roomy, both in front and sideways, so that I could sleep comfortably at night; and a little table was in front of each, for supporting a book or a mirror. In short, I know of no public conveyance so comfortable as this. It makes, perhaps, including demurrage, about six miles an hour. I have no road book, but the entire distance I travelled from Orenburgh to St. Petersburg is, I believe, about fifteen hundred miles, following the sinuosities of the road, of which, the portion remaining, viz., between the two capitals, is about four hundred and ninety miles. This has its share of forest and steppe; through which is drawn an excellent high road, carefully repaired, and straight as an arrow. The variations of level are not considerable, and there is nothing grand between Orenburgh and the new capital. I learned, previous to quitting Moscow, that the Emperor had done justice to the

noble Perroffski; assuring him that he did not hold a brave soldier accountable for the caprice of the seasons.

I was still unable, from the state of my wound, to make notes of the journey, and I cannot remember any thing very remarkable between Moscow and St. Petersburg. The villages were much as before; but small towns increased as we neared the capital. These were generally neat, built for the most part with wood, often roofed with sheet iron, always exhibiting an abundance of glass, of which there are extensive fabrics and great facilities of manufacture, in Russia. The women were always to be seen sitting, in the evening, outside their houses; but there was still a poor shew of the male sex. It had been my amusement, whilst travelling post, to kiss my hand to every pretty girl I met. They always understood the compliment, and often entered into the spirit of it, with much vivacity and fun. When we alighted, I sought out the tiny lasses, who are decent until the age of seven or eight, and bribed them for kisses with oranges and sweetmeats. It was a great delight to me to see European faces once more, and especially those of children. I did not, however, observe one seriously pretty woman amongst the peasantry, during my residence in Russia; and I am sure it was for no want of curiosity. They are all exactly alike, grey-eyed, yellow-haired, and pink-faced. I do not speak of other features, because they are scarcely perceptible at a short distance. A gentleman once asked me at dinner what I thought of Russian women. I handed him a dish of pink strawberries, of which each was facsimile of the other, in colour and general feature. The Russians, in return, declare that our ladies are only fit for the kitchen. An Englishman's judgment between the two would not pass for much. But if any one would understand what constitutes a Russian beauty, let him take the following description:—"La fille, se nommant Oulitta, etait d'une grande beautè, pro-

bablement replète et blanche et rouge de figure, ainsi que le veulent les Russes."* As for feature, if they have not *much* of that, they make up for it in ancle.

The principal towns are Tver and Novgorod. The latter is not the celebrated place of the fair, which is called by distinction Nijni Novgorod, or the Lower New City, to distinguish it from its namesake. The site of Novgorod is remarkable, upon the lake Ilmen. I observed a curious breakwater, which might be introduced elsewhere, I think, with much effect, and particularly on the Madras Coast. It consists of a chain of buoys anchored fast, yielding to every impression of the waves, yet breaking their violence in no trifling degree. There is no limit to the effect of this contrivance, properly constructed, and it seems to be the only thing capable of resisting the destructive power of such a sea as rages off Madras. This city, formerly the most flourishing in the empire, was utterly desolated by John the Terrible, in A.D. 1570, upon suspicion of intrigue with Poland. This monster came himself to preside over the slaughter of about 10,000 victims of his vengeance. It has never recovered this blow, and the rise of other cities around it, has carried away the commerce that might have set it up.

I was rather surprised, at being ushered by a forest of cedar and birch, to the presence of the new capital. The country undulated very slightly, and became flatter as we approached the city. Then, were seen gentlemen's houses, deeply shadowed in trees, and often most happily sited in spots of romantic beauty, such as we do not expect to find in the neighbourhood of a metropolis. These increased in number, until their seclusion was lost in contiguity; but still they were prettily perched upon green banks or declivities, well sheltered with trees; and at length we found the Diligence arrested at the barrier of St.

* Schnitzler.

Petersburg, whilst passports were examined and compared. This gateway is of cast iron, and by no means inelegant. It may with safety be affirmed, without minutely scrutinising the architecture, that few, if any, cities in the world possess portals so handsome. On entering, the road for some distance traversed a very thinly peopled area, of which the only remarkable objects were a few ugly churches. The houses then increased in number and consequence; but we had not penetrated to the handsomer portion of the capital, when the Diligence stopped at its hotel, where I put up for the present, until I should secure a more suitable position.

My first object was to wait upon Her Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary, Mr. Bloomfield, and I sent for one of the carriages which are to be seen in the streets, awaiting the pleasure of the public. I do not call them hackney coaches, because they are so much superior, both as respects the horses and the vehicles, being often quite equal to our glass coaches. In one of these I deposited myself, and rattled off to the English quay, where I expected to find the British minister. I was delighted with the neatness and genteel aspect, so to speak, of the streets. All was new, all clean, open, well built; the houses stuccoed, the squares spacious, the public buildings quite worthy of a great empire; the sparkling waters of the deep and blue Nieva, the handsome buildings which line the quay, the clear, sunny heaven, and air untainted by vapour, are all delightful to the stranger who enters St. Petersburg, and who has not yet time to analyse each separate feature. My search was long fruitless; not a living creature could give me an idea where I should find the British mission, and, after visiting the houses of a variety of ambassadors, I with difficulty procured direction.

Mr. Bloomfield was at home, and received me with much courtesy. I remained to dine with him, and found that Her Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs

had sent instructions that I should proceed to London. This was most joyful intelligence, which I had scarcely dared to hope for, after seventeen years' absence. I shifted my quarters to Coulon's hotel, one of the best in St. Petersburg, and tolerably centrical. It is a large establishment. The rooms were handsome, and not ill furnished; the ceilings lofty and painted. Neither in London nor in Paris have I met with such apartments at hotels. The cuisine also was excellent; the attendance, however, is wretched, and there is a want of tidiness and decency in the arrangement of the rooms which must be very disgusting to a traveller from England, and struck even one who had been wandering in the desert. The expence of living in St. Petersburg, is as great as at a London hotel, but the table and the apartments are better.

CHAPTER XLI.

Nature of the Beauty of St. Petersburg—Population—Description—Palaces — Spires — St. Isaac's Cathedral — Column of Alexander — Monoliths—Statue of Peter—Palace of the Minister for Foreign Affairs—Church of Kāsān, etc.—Hospitality—Museum—Artillery—Hermitage—The Taurida Palace—Malachite Altar.

OF the beauty of St. Petersburg, there never perhaps were two opinions. But I believe it is not generally known, in what this beauty consists, and I confess that I was, in some respects, much disappointed with a city, which nevertheless, take it all in all, is the handsomest I have seen. The river Nieva is a stream of about twice the breadth, and four times the volume of the Thames; but let no one imagine, from the comparison, a body of fat, black, sliding slime, sufficiently liquid to shrink daily to the dimensions of an ordinary ditch, and leave on either side wide consolidations of itself, reeking with the abominations of a million and a half fat citizens, and the rinsings of all the gas, tan, pitch, glue, and bleaching yards of the metropolis of the world. No! the Nieva is of crystalline purity, being the surplus water of the Lake Ladoga, where mountain streams deposit their sediment ere they pour their tribute to the world of waters. On reaching St. Petersburg, this stream breaks into three branches, which, again subdividing, form a variety of islands, for the most part richly wooded, and occupied by the pleasant country villas of the nobility and gentry of the metropolis. St. Petersburg stands upon the left, or southern bank, of the principal of these streams, in

breadth equal to the Thames at London, and has the river on its North-East and Western sides. Its extent is equal, perhaps, to that of Manchester. Its population, in 1833, was estimated at 445,735. If this was correct, it may be fairly reckoned at 470,000, in 1841. But the estimate probably includes the population of the suburbs, in which any foreigner would reckon those dwellings which lie beyond the main stream of the Nieva, and is besides, I think, exaggerated. It is said, that there are 30,000 Germans residing at this capital.

The site of St. Petersburg has some trifling inequalities of level, but they are scarcely perceptible. Three concentric canals leave and rejoin the river, serving, perhaps, to drain the city through which they pass. I am not sure that they add anything to its beauty, although the chain bridges spanning them are handsome. A modern city, built by the order of a despotic monarch, himself a skilful mechanic, naturally betrays its origin in the regularity of its ground plan. The streets of St. Petersburg are straight, regular, and open. They have no grandeur, and produce only the effect of harmony, and extreme decency. The Niefski, which is the finest, is certainly a handsome street, but no more. Its length is considerable, its breadth is limited, and even the thin population of St. Petersburgh circulates with difficulty through its narrow footpaths. The houses on either side are stuccoed, of good height, and handsome appearance. It is not in any individual street that the beauty of St. Petersburg consists; it is, that the worst is neat, open, and regular. The pavement of all is abominable, owing, apparently, to the marshy nature of the soil, and the violent extremes of heat and cold which affect it. A wooden pavement has been attempted in the Niefski, but, although a great relief to carriages during the summer months, it is found impracticable in the winter, when water accumulates in different quantities beneath the blocks, and, freezing, elevates one above another.

The public buildings of St. Petersburg (churches excepted) are, after its river, its chief glory: they are very numerous, and seldom unworthy of their appropriation. The most remarkable are the royal palaces and the office for foreign affairs. The former, three in number, border the Nieva, and look back upon squares. The utmost advantage, therefore, is made them as ornaments to the capital.

The winter palace is a building of considerable dimensions, and some pains have been taken to make it a fitting habitation for a great monarch. Its ground plan is a square, but it forms with the Hermitage, which it joins, an oblong: it is of three storeys, supported each by columns; and might have been as elegant as it is handsome, had proportion been preserved, and had not the pent roof been covered with hideous chimneys of all shapes, heights, and dimensions, which at first sight give one the idea that the palace is on fire, and covered with persons employed in extinguishing the flames. It forms, nevertheless, a noble object upon the magnificent river, and its effect is happily sustained by the group of fine buildings around it. These are, on the north-east, the Hermitage; on the south-east, the immense mass in which unite the offices for the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Adjutant-General (an ominous conjunction, shewing a disposition rather to invade than to repel); and on the south-west the Admiralty, around which and the palaces are open esplanades, perhaps wider than symmetry requires, and so wretchedly paved as to render their passage, whether on foot or in a vehicle, a very painful operation.

The Admiralty, although it presents little that can interest the eye of a stranger, must not be passed over without an observation upon its gilt spire, a structure destitute of all proportion, but singular from its extreme tenuity. This circumstance, its gilding, and its deficiency of perpendicularity give it a singularly unpleasing and paltry aspect, as if one should try, by

weight of purse, to compensate for personal deformity. A nearly similar, but less disagreeable, spire is seen over the isolated fort opposite the Admiralty.

The cathedral of St. Isaac deserves especial notice, as being one of the finest in the world; next in size to St. Paul's at London, and built upon a model not very dissimilar. The material employed is, however, as much richer as the architecture is inferior to St. Paul's. The lower columns of the portico are single needles of rich, highly-polished granite and porphyry, about twenty-two feet in girth, and sixty feet in height. A second colonnade of single stones supports the verandah. These needles are of thirty-five feet each. The roof is a high dome, of which the frame is iron. Upon the roof of the verandah, or circular colonnade, is posted a circle of colossal bronze angels, that add nothing to the beauty of the edifice: they were suggested, it is said, by the reigning emperor, to break a very uncouth angle formed by the base of the dome and the roof of the colonnade. Something, certainly, was needed, but I should have preferred any architectural screen to this goose-like array of brass. The introduction of angels, to garnish some of the most paltry architecture of modern Rome, has connected the symbol in every mind with littleness and poverty: and as the bronze, which is now bright, will soon acquire an ebon hue, it will always be a patchwork in the design, and add as little to general effect as the introduction of an emerald, however costly, into a front row of teeth.

The scaffolding was still around this building, but it was not difficult to imagine it removed, and to calculate the effect of the structure as a mass and as a design. In this, I think, the world will be disappointed: the fine features that it can boast are not in perfect harmony. We feel at once that it did not spring, like Troy, to the music of Apollo's lute. The interior was so filled with scaffolding, that I could

scarcely conjecture its future effect; but if the Greek cross be the ground plan, this can scarcely be great and noble.

The column of Alexander naturally arrests attention. It is a single needle of polished granite, eighty feet in height, supported upon a massive and beautiful base of bronze, which, like most works of the same grandeur and merit at St. Petersburg, are the work of an English engineer, Mr. Baird, a gentleman as much respected for his worth as for his genius. The capital, if I mistake not, is also bronze, and is crowned by a figure of Alexander. The position of this monument is happy, and I know of nothing in the world equal to it in beauty, as a monumental column. Our London monument, otherwise so handsome, is rendered utterly ridiculous by its summit; and the columns of Trajan and of Antonine, though very elaborate, and not inelegant, want the nervous simplicity of this single shaft from the heart of the granite mountain. The column at Alexandria, which is also a single needle of granite, wants, I think, the fine proportions of this.

Let me however observe, whilst upon this subject, that this fashion of preferring single stones to an accumulated mass is barbarous, and speaks rather of despotism than of art. It is barbarous, because it sacrifices beauty and duration to the merit of having, at great labour and expense, set up a large stone from a distant land. Could this stone, indeed, be carved across the grain of the rock, so that the stratification should be laid horizontally, the additional labour and expense might be rewarded by increased durability; but this we believe to be impossible: such large cylinders of rock are obtainable only as we find this, viz. with a longitudinal stratification. What is the consequence? Look up at this shaft, and you will see. Although but a few years have elapsed since its erection, it is already beginning to split at the junction of

two strata.* *That*, being the most porous vein of the mass, imbibes the excessive moisture of the air, which afterwards freezing, and increasing in bulk as it crystallizes, rends asunder the granite, firm as we suppose that stone to be. Now, had this column been composed of blocks, laid with their strata horizontal, not only might the size of the column have been four times greater, without additional expense, but the weight of the mass would have preserved the firmness of its component particles, and that which a few years have sufficed to effect, had scarcely been wrought in the lapse of as many centuries. It is true, that in the dry, hot climate of Egypt such needles deride the wing of time, and remain to this day in their original freshness. But the climate of St. Petersburg spares not the most solid of rocks; the marble itself melts beneath its influence. Any of my countrymen who would desire to see an instance of the weakness of stone as a material for edifices, when the strata are not horizontal, has only to visit Salisbury cathedral, where he will find the material of the Gothic columns splitting in every direction by that very weight which, had they been rightly laid, had bound their substance firmer together. The admiration felt on beholding a single stone of large dimensions is a vulgar reward for a great undertaking, it is the emotion of little minds. It was not for this the Athenians wrought, when the temple of Theseus and the Parthenon rose, to serve as models to the world. There we see no single stones of huge dimensions to startle the weak and vain. Block upon block the beautiful Pentelic marble is piled, in columns which, but for the hand of violence, had outlasted the memory of St. Petersburg. The Romans, more proud of power than of art, with an

* Woe to the reformer who should presume to utter such treason against the column which Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up! A visit to Siberia were the least penalty. It is formally examined from time to time by an Imperial commission, and pronounced sound by an Imperial ukase.

ambition of duration not always seconded by knowledge of principles, delighted to carve out monolithic shafts, which, in spite of every advantage of climate, are betraying their weakness: whilst the temple of Theseus is uncorroded in the sharpest of its angles by the lapse of a thousand more years.

The equestrian statue of Peter the Great is considered a work of some merit. Estimates of works of art must always be comparative; and I had been too long a stranger to sculpture, to form a comparative judgment. I could only say how far it was natural, and how far Nature had been seized, in an attitude worthy of immortality. I was, therefore, not much struck with this statue, which represents Peter surmounting a rocky eminence, whilst his horse is placing its hind foot upon the throat of a serpent. It seemed to me, that the idea would have applied more neatly to Catherine, who ascended the throne by placing her foot upon the throat of her husband, Peter; unless, indeed, the young viper be Peter the Great's own and only son, whom he squashed in like manner.

Whatever may be the architectural merit of the palace of the Foreign Minister, it is undoubtedly a magnificent mass of building, and one of the grandest and most striking features of this city. Of the other public buildings, my impression is not generally very distinct. I thought them all fine, but very few of them elegant. They are a host in number, but I must leave their details to guide-books. The churches are very generally mean and ugly. There are, however, two remarkable exceptions; one of these is the cathedral of Kāsān, which fronts the Niefski, and forms its principal adornment. It is a singularly elegant building, and the materials are costly. A semi-circular colonnade, of much beauty, forms the front, built of grey granite, having 132 fluted Corinthian columns. Above this is seen the dome, surrounded and supported at the base by a colonnade. The interior is

especially beautiful, the dome being supported by fifty-six Corinthian monoliths of polished blue granite, with bases and capitals of gilt bronze. The altar is enclosed by a balustrade of silver, and has a gate of the same material; and all the decorations are of correspondent beauty. The pavement is of variegated marble. It is one of the handsomest temples I have seen.

The imperial theatre is rather large than elegant. It occupies the centre of a square, opening into the Niefski. I attended the performance, but was, perhaps, unfortunate. The farce was good, otherwise the acting was indifferent; and there was more ancle than beauty in the petticoat department. I am, however, a bad judge of theatricals, for they always disappoint me.

There are some pleasant public gardens at St. Petersburg, crowded at certain hours with gay figures, and adorned with statues. But the islands afford the most agreeable resort for those who would while away a vacant hour; and at one of these a band plays periodically in the evening, attracting a large concourse of listeners. No public resort that I am acquainted with is half so agreeable as this spot. It was rendered peculiarly so to me, by the society and kind attentions of a most amiable family, who, hearing that a stranger was in St. Petersburg, opened their house and their hearts to him, and gave him the privileges of an old friend. The young ladies of this family spoke to me in my native tongue; and I found under their roof a fair countrywoman, who had met there with hearts akin to her own in all the gentler virtues. It was the sole opportunity I enjoyed of witnessing domestic life at the capital. I saw it assuredly in a very amiable form, in kindness of heart, affectionate attachment, hospitality, and courtesy. Yet the constant round of recreation, in which the more wealthy live, would not suit an English mind, accustomed to earn the capacity to enjoy repose by

severe exercise. This estimable family assured me that they seldom spent one day of any month alone. They enumerated the days of the week, and each day had its hospitable rites, to be enjoyed or conferred.

I have spoken first of those objects which first address themselves to the eye of the traveller. St. Petersburg possesses, besides, several museums worthy of notice. That of minerals was described to me as one of the most extensive and best arranged in the world; but I was several times disappointed of seeing it. The Museum of Artillery is highly interesting, possessing a large assortment of singular weapons, amongst which were wrought iron cannon of damask twist, taken, I believe, from the Turks. The objects are arranged in handsome halls, and the museum is quite worthy of a great nation. A statue in marble of Catherine II. makes her a very lovely creature in figure and in face, as indeed she was in her youth. The statue is a *chef d'œuvre.*

At the Hermitage is a considerable collection of paintings, amongst which are one or two gems. A St. Cecilia, by Carlo Dolce, is the most fascinating of all. It blinds the eye to all beside. An apartment is devoted entirely to the spirited figure landscapes of Wouvermans, perhaps the most splendid collection in the world. One is never weary of admiring the works of a painter, who, in his own style, has no rival. We gaze upon his canvas, and can scarcely believe the figures are at rest. We join the bridle of the fair falconer, beneath her sunny sky; our heart laughs with the merry, or we catch the frenzy of the warrior, as we see him dashing to the fight. By no pencil has nature been so faithfully portrayed; by none has the spirit which animates her been caught and fixed to the same degree in its sparkle or its frown. A woodland scene, by Ruysdael, the chief feature in which is a pool covered with lilies, is the only landscape besides, of the whole collection, that struck my fancy. I was astonished to see how much good canvas might be

tortured into bad oil-cloth by men styling themselves masters. A pair of full lengths, by Vandyke, of Charles I. and Henrietta, are fine paintings, and interesting from association.

Amongst this large collection of paintings, there are, undoubtedly, several that possess considerable merit; but I have no catalogue, and made no notes. My taste, also, does not lead me to admire mere skill in light and shadow, colouring and perspective. Unless I can see rays of genius shining through the design, I had far rather look at the moving, living objects around me. The dullest of these cannot be so dull as the mere skilful performance of the hand and eye, into which has been breathed no spark of Promethean fire.

Many noble vases and mosaics are to be seen in these halls. All is princely, and worthy of the collection of a monarch; and I have since seen museums of painting, better known, that fell far behind this. But, as I have already said, I am not qualified to judge of the comparative merit of works of art, for I cannot interest myself in dulness sufficiently to remember whether the new or old specimen is the duller. Where there is the divine spirit of beauty, breathing of a mind that has not lost its impress of the Maker's touch, there I *can* admire and remember, and bear each memory about with me in my pilgrimage, as part of the treasure of my thoughts. Several indifferent pieces of sculpture are here exhibited, amongst which I observed a beautiful performance, a dying Psyche. Such, at least, I supposed it; but neither the catalogue nor the statue itself could enlighten me as to its author. The Taurida palace, once the residence of the famous prince Potemkin, contains some very miserable daubs, and a few antique marbles. In the Conservatory I observed an admirable copy, in black marble, of the Laocoon. I have since seen the original, yet my admiration of this copy is undiminished. It is a most beautiful performance. The

rooms of this palace I thought mean and tawdry; but the grounds are particularly pleasant, being diversified by wood and water. In one of the halls is exhibited an object of art, quite unique, being an altar of malachite, a precious mineral,* found in the copper mines of the Oorahl mountains. This malachite, of which the colour is two shades of green, richly blended together in wavy and contorted streaks, bears a high polish, and being sawn into thin slices, is veneered over coarser stone. It is one of the most beautiful of minerals. The altar in question is a dome, upwards of nineteen feet in girth, supported upon columns about eight feet high, of which the bases and capitals are silver gilt. It stands upon a dais bordered with gilt cornice work, and floored with agates. The dome and columns are of malachite. It is the most costly and elegant *bijou* in the world. It is destined for St. Isaac's, when that temple shall be completed, but will be lost there, and would be more in place in the smaller but more elegant cathedral of Kāsān.

* Stalactitic copper.

CHAPTER XLII.

Maturer Impressions of St. Petersburgh—Want of Life in the Streets—Observations on Russia—Degenerate Love of foreign Customs and Manners—Effect of her Entry into Europe—Evils that may be its Result—Native Wealth of Russia—Considerations of her Position as a European and an Asiatic State—Her internal Policy.

THE description of a city, when it is requisite to examine severally its features, is necessarily a dull task to both writer and reader. It is seldom that works of art, and especially of architecture, attain that degree of symmetry or perfection that can excite our enthusiasm, and give us a pleasure communicable to other minds; and when they fall short of this, they provoke our censure, or excite our disgust. Nevertheless, false impressions of a city are formed when only general effects are produced; and in no case more so than in that of St. Petersburg, which, being one of the finest cities in the world, and possessing perhaps a larger proportion of grand public buildings than any other, has but two or three structures that, separately considered, reward the trouble of perusal. Other cities have risen, by the gradual process of ages, from obscurity to consideration and grandeur. But St. Petersburg was planted at once by a despot, or rather was transplanted hither from another soil, so that choice sites were occupied by the imperial buildings, and the rabble was kept aloof from the precincts of royalty; and none who preferred the banks of the Nieva to the wilds of Siberia, presumed to build upon the Emperor's pet site a slovenly habitation. And thus, if we except the beautiful city of

Jyepoor in India, which was built in like manner from a ground plan, there is perhaps no city in the Old World so regularly constructed; and there are, in consequence, few that so strike with admiration. This, however, speedily wears off; for, after some days' residence in a city, the eye inevitably occupies itself rather with details than with general effects, and it is then that we perceive the nakedness of the land. We are no longer satisfied with masses of masonry, which at a distance seemed imposing. We ask for the mind and taste that should be impressed upon the labours of man; for it is only as a triumph of the human mind over matter that any artificial structure can be beautiful. If this be not apparent, we shall find more pleasure in gazing on a brick-kiln than on a palace; for the first offers promise of being moulded into beauty, whereas the latter is for ever fettered in mediocrity.

But there are, even at first sight, some particulars in which the stranger from more busy capitals meets here with disappointment. He sees a beautiful city around him, and knows it to be the capital of one of the largest empires on earth. But he perceives not the throb of life, requisite to send prosperity through a system so extended. The people saunter through the streets at their ease, they seem to enjoy a perpetual holiday. You do not see them striding along with the energy imparted by a sense of the value of time, wrapped in profound commercial thoughts, and, like goodly barks under press of sail, throwing back from their bows the opposing current. You do not see the streets filled to suffocation with carts and carriages. The scene is that of one of our watering places. The short interval of summer, when work is possible, is filled with trifling cares. There is evidently still room in the land for its population. They can eat, drink, and live to-day without the dread of starving to-morrow. That despotism, which sits like an incubus upon commerce, has at least prevented the

unnatural and soul-absorbing strife of great elements in a little cause. They are not slaves to the increase of capital. I say not they have less love than their neighbours for the yellow metal, but only that the thirst has not been excited into frenzy by those motives and incentives which are to be found in a free and commercial state, where so much mental energy must be brought forward to earn even the necessaries of life, that the soul too often becomes the slave of a routine of occupation, reluctantly and grudgingly commenced.

Such a state of things is not yet known in Russia. That country is exempt from the evils of this unnatural stimulus, as it is destitute of the advantages which are its remoter consequence. The whole system of organization must indeed be changed ere Russia can become a great commercial nation; or ere the boiler of this fifty-million power can be subjected to a pressure sufficient to give vigour and life to the stupendous machinery dependent upon it.

I am not one of those who, were I Russian, would desire such a change, any more than I would wish for the continuance of that ignorance and slavery, which, whatever may be said to the contrary, are undoubted evils. I think that Russia is one of those singular exceptions to general rules, which are occasionally encountered. I think she possesses in the peculiarity of her system, her position, and the temper of her people, the elements of a condition happier than that possessed by some freer and more wealthy states. The danger to which at present she is most obnoxious, proceeds from her too great affectation of European airs. Russia is anxious to forget her own glory as the first of Asiatic states: she has abandoned her sacred citadel, Moscow, the stronghold of her renown, to build herself a capital in Europe, and despises in public her own nervous, musical, and expressive tongue. Her melodies, which are some of the finest in the world, are scarcely known by name to her

highborn daughters. Her poetry, rich in idea, in thought, in expression, is read only by a few enthusiasts. Her national costume, so graceful and so dignified, is cast aside for the smirk finery of Paris. Her stately national dance has given place to the quadrille. Even the beard, that ornament of manhood, which a wise Intelligence thought necessary to complete the dignity of his vicegerent on earth, is now the symbol of inferiority, and retained only by a race whom the smooth-chinned Petersburgher affects to hold in scorn. Everything, in short, that was national, that tended to throw a dignity over the degree of polish attained by a great and most interesting nation, has been carefully rooted out, and Russia has preferred (O how unlike a Cæsar!) a low grade upon the scale of Europe to the queendom of the Asiatic World.

Let me not be supposed blind to the necessity which led that great and nervous genius to open to his land an entry into the senate of Europe, and give her voice weight amongst the councils of the civilized world. The advantages of that masterly movement are too evident to be overlooked by even the dullest eye. But the work which his great mind effected in a day, requires to be watched over for ages, and regulated in its consequences by kindred genius, otherwise it may prove, eventually, as pernicious as at first it was fruitful of good.

By the seat Russia has taken amongst the Potentates of Europe; *by* the gates of commerce she has thrown open in the Baltic sea; *by* the knowledge which has flowed in upon a mind, quick to apprehend, and skilful to imitate; Russia has been the gainer to a degree quite unprecedented in the annals of the world. These advantages, no doubt, are on the increase. But they have not reached her pure of alloy. They have invested her with power and consequence. They have revealed to her the secret of her mental possessions. They have uprooted some abuses, and

are working at the foundation of others: but if they destroy that which is the strength and glory of a people; if they sap her nationality, and dissolve that bond of union of fifty millions of people in a single interest, for which she *has* been remarkable, and by which she *might* be glorious; then have they been to her, as the acid to the iron, as mercury to the pure gold, as the wind from her sea of ice to the granite rock of her columns, as the sun, and this image is more accurate, to her memorable palace of ice: for a moment they have lighted her with rainbow hues, to melt her adamantine firmness into water, that shall be dissipated in the dust, and shall vanish from the eyes of the nations.

Where this nationality is rooted in the character of a people; where, I mean, it proceeds from mental characteristics, it will brave (without suffering), a very intimate intercourse of that people with neighbouring states. But this is not the case with Russia. Her weakness is want of self-esteem. She has a disposition to think more of the opinion of others than of her own self-estimate, and this weakness is acted upon powerfully by her position, for so long a time on the confines of civilization. Every foreign voice has with her the authority of a long established name. She asks not *what* is said, but *who* has said it: and a Russian Socrates would be utterly neglected for the counsels of a French dancing-master. It is this peculiarity which gives such extreme importance to the preservation in Russia of those peculiarities of costume, of manners, and customs, by which she was once so strongly distinguished from the nations of Europe. Other nations may part with these without losing a jot of nationality. But Russia cannot. They are rallying points, necessary from the constitution of her mind and her position in the scale of civilization. A century hence they may become of less vital moment: for she will then be accustomed to the sound of her own voice, in the literary and political

world, and will have penetrated, by comparison, into the weakness of those claims upon her deference, which other voices command. Then also, we trust, she will have discovered the beauty and the poetry of good old customs, practised by our fathers' fathers; and will retain, from pride, that which at present she would reject, from shame and diffidence.

Oh! it is not only from political motives, that a son of Russia should set his soul to the task of preserving her nationality. Few young States have ever boasted the elemental riches of Russia. From her hundred peoples, scattered over a hundred climes, is poured an ever-varying soul of song; now deep, now plaintive, now passionate, now tender; anon, gushing forth into the liveliest humour, intelligible to a stranger to whom the words are unknown. Amongst those peoples, and married to those melodies, are odes and ballads and romances, each characteristic, like the music, of its particular origin; all joining together to form a national series. The fisher of the Caspian, the sailor of the Euxine, the tented Tartar, the Cossaq of the Don, the Volga, the Oorahl; the peasant of a thousand districts, from the Danube to the golden mountains;* the tender of the rein-deer, and the driver of the camel; each has his several part, the result of his particular clime and habits, in the magnificent oratorio of this mighty land. Each lay, as it pleads separately its separate cause, brings before the eye, with the vivid colouring of fancy, the solitary tent, the snow-girt cottage, the blue dancing waves of the Caspian, the swift hurrying gusts of the Euxine, the rein-deer's light step, or the camel's bell. All associations breathing of poetry. All inspirations of the spirit of song. Each capable of lending its separate aid, to build the most powerful of the triumphs of sound. Where is the Russian would sacrifice this national treasure to the stolen music of foreign lands, which his fathers have not kindled to: which his

* The Oorahlian—the richest of the world in gold.

warriors have not rejoiced in; which bears him from the past no sacred memories of his country, his race, his glory? Spurn such a one from amongst you. Regard him as the invader of your honour, the betrayer of his country. Trust to your own resources. Be assured, that a language so rich in poetry and music, is the only fervid vehicle for your thoughts; that you can be great in literature through no other! Wander not abroad in search of images; but mould into grand designs the inexhaustible treasures of thought, of feeling, of idea, which meet you at every step in your native land. Greatness was never attained by imitation. The eagle in the sea, or the swan on land; each is little, from having *been* greatest, because he has forsaken his own for another element. Dare then to believe the catalogue of your own resources. Dare to achieve greatness for and by yourself. To such achievement there is no limit. To any other means there is one certain recompense—it is, disgrace.

It seems to me that Russia, in her intercourse with Europe, should be guided by considerations of her very peculiar constitution and circumstances. That so widely spread an empire should hold together under a free constitution, seems impossible. Whenever prosperity shall have produced surplus capital, and surplus capital shall have improved communication, and improved communication shall have carried, with the tide of knowledge, its inseparable adjunct, power, this enormous empire must split into a Northern and a Southern Kingdon; and every foot of territory Russia adds to her South-western frontier, is tending to hasten the dismemberment. Whether such a crisis would be well purchased by the increase of freedom and power to the subject, I shall leave the learned to decide; but it cannot be an object of desire to the existing Government, and a patriot might regard with some regret, any prospect of seeing his country dissolved, even by beneficial causes. He

would, at any rate, ask whether it be not possible to preserve its integrity a little longer, without the exclusion of improvement; and he would seek to defer that dismemberment, until the advantages to be gained were ripe to the hand. Nothing, perhaps, tends so greatly to throw back a kingdom, as a premature revolution; a revolution, for which the state of the public mind is not sufficiently advanced. Which is brought about by a single class of society, and felt only by them to be necessary to their country. Yet such revolutions do happen; and where the knowledge poured into a land lights upon one class alone, they seem inevitable.

Now what is the state of Russia? She has one almost free man. It is her sovereign. After him comes, not an aristocracy, but an army. An army, officered by accomplished men, who are as far in advance of their countrymen, as if born two centuries later. After this immense body of military, are civilians in government employ; and next are those, who are bred to either profession. This is the aristocracy of Russia. Every well-born man seeks employment in this, and most are educated accordingly. The consequence of this is, that upon the gentry of Russia, light and civilization have not dawned, but burst with sudden and dazzling effulgence. This light, this civilization, has not reached them by that gradual diffusion which distributes to each his share, according to station; it has fallen like a meteor, selecting the heads of a single class, as sole objects of its illuminating influence. Beneath them is a peasantry, one of the finest in the world, but the most ignorant and most superstitious; slaves to their several masters, and knowing the monarch, only by the selection of victims from time to time, to be immolated by the Poles or the Circassians.

Now, what is the hold possessed by the Imperial power, over this singular aristocracy? Have they dignity in the state to lose? Have the majority lands

and possessions to forfeit? Is there, in short, any danger to them in the prospect of revolution, beyond that which every soldier is accustomed to confront with indifference? Have they not, on the contrary, every thing to gain? Where minds are thrown into violent strife, who are so likely, as the most accomplished, to gain the mastery? We have seen, time out of mind, the power of the heads of this body, I mean the ministers, in the affairs of the empire. We have seen them raise up and pull down despots. We have seen them preserve that undeviating system of caution and encroachment in their foreign policy, which cannot possibly be attributed to the caprice of successive despotic monarchs. — *Then*, they were single-handed. They were individuals, and not heads of a powerful body, who have since been born in a day. It was not, therefore, their object to look after the rights of any class of the community: nor had any class, such hold upon them, as could influence them to this end. They thought only of personal security or aggrandisement; or if they were patriotic, wisely retained that form of government under which alone, for many years, their country can prosper. But, should they once more come upon the stage, it will be no longer as individuals, but as representatives of men as well born and highly educated as themselves. These men will scarcely be content under any change, that does not advance *them*. These men are not only the people, but the army. What will be their object? An aristocratic government. Not a government that shall deprive them of their vassals and slaves: but that which shall give themselves licence.

Such a revolution should be dreaded by all who love Russia; and who should seek to raise up the heads of the degraded people. Any revolution that shall happen ere the people can have or even desire to have a voice, must be injurious to the nation. It is a singular circumstance in the condition of Russia, that

although she possesses no effective aristocracy, as a balance to the power of her monarch, yet she labours under one of the worst evils of an aristocracy, viz., feudal bondage. Her chance of remedy from this, is in the continuance of her despotic monarchy. The monarch requires a balance to the rising power of his ephemeral aristocracy, and he can find it only in adding to the knowledge and freedom of his peasantry, and rescuing them, so far as he may, from their condition, as mere tools in the hands of the other party. This, we believe, is even now in operation: but it is a task of delicacy and of time: and we fear, that although their freedom is contemplated, their enlightenment is rather dreaded than encouraged, upon the old system, which leads despotic governments to dread the influx of knowledge.

Russia is in a state to admit of much more, with advantage to her present system. Nay, we have shewn that she requires it, in order to the preservation of that system. Were her peasantry elevated to their proper grade in a monarchy, she might hold together yet many years; daily advancing in power and prosperity. The country is so wide, that there is little temptation to congregate in cities, those hot houses of faction and independence. Every man may still select any quantity of land for his plough; and the wide steppe feeds his flocks and herds. He has neither temptation nor opportunity of discussing politics; nor will have, until the steppe is peopled, and the surplus population collected into towns for manufactures. The censorship of the press, is a check to the influx of inflammatory literature, which assuredly in the present constitution of society were a curse to Russia; and all that the peasantry can receive may be of a healthful character, tending to nourish, not to force, the mind; and preparing them to take their place in the Commonwealth, when by the inevitable process of improvement, a constitution shall be framed.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Further Considerations of the Position of Russia—Of her principal Capital—In a military Point of View—What would be the Effect of a Return to Moscow.

OF the extreme benefit to Russia, gained by the removal of her capital into Europe, not a doubt can be maintained. She *was* barbarous, she became civilised. She was weak, and became strong. She was unknown, and she became renowned. But whether she is wise in retaining that position, is a question quite worthy of discussion.

In order to do it justice, we must bear in mind the peculiar constitution of this vast empire; the great feature of which is the extreme disparity in population, wealth, importance, power, between different portions of a country under a single head. From the Oorahl mountains to the sea of Tartary, all, in fact, that belongs, according to Russian nomenclature, to Asia, is waste, desolate steppe, thinly sprinkled with population, yielding perhaps little or no revenue; but easily governed, and therefore tending little by its weight at the extremity of an overgrown empire, to rend it asunder. Even from the Oorahl mountains, as we return westward, we find a scanty population, until we reach the stream of the majestic Volga. Excepting, therefore, the mineral treasures of the Oorahl moutains, the government gains by its possessions east of that river, little more than exemption from troublesome neighbours; and there can be no

manner of doubt that a sea,* shut up by ice, on the eastern frontier of Europe, would be for her a better barrier than the almost boundless steppe of Asia subject to her authority. A population of four and half millions, can scarcely yield revenue sufficient to defray the expenses of governing a tract larger than the whole of Europe; and which, if it ever become worth possession, must lapse from the imperial crown.

But, as we approach Europe, the land increases in value and in the number of inhabitants. It is more rich, more enlightened and less easily ruled. And whereas, on the east and north, Russia is defended by a sea of ice, and on the south by the vast steppes of China and Tartary; so, on this frontier, she comes in contact with several powerful states, with whom she has often warred without advantage. In fixing a capital, therefore, for this mighty empire, the western portion is inevitably selected; and as on the north she is accessible to the powerful marines of England, France, and America, and has here the principal gates of her commercial intercourse with Europe, it is expedient that the seat of government be not very remote from the shores of the Baltic. The only question is, whether it should be upon the sea-coast, at the very extremity of so extended an empire; or whether some inland position would not be securer and more beneficial to the realm.

In a military point of view, the capital of Russia, or of any but the sovereign of the seas, in a spot accessible to an armed marine, is a blunder. The strength of Russia is in the boundless extent of her dominions. The thickness, so to speak, of her shell.

* When this was penned, the author was not aware of the rapid and silent progress of Russia on the river Amoor, which promises at no remote day to give her naval and commercial consequence in the Tartar and Chinese oceans. It is manifest, however, that a settlement so disjoined from the capital by boundless wastes, covered seven months in the year with snow, must be regarded rather as a foreign settlement than as an integral part of the empire.

She is a tortoise, who can be molested only when of her own accord she protrudes some vital part. By protruding her head into the gulf of Finland, she forfeits her impenetrability, and places herself at the mercy of every more powerful naval state.*

If, indeed, she could ever hope to command upon the ocean, the risk might be worthy of the chance. But Russia was not designed by heaven to be a great naval power. It is not the genius of her people. They have not the enterprise, the decision, the promptitude, necessary for naval exploits. They would not run, they would make a good stand-up fight, when put to it; but they had much rather leave it alone, and they are wise. It is not their province, nor ever can be. Russia, indeed, as she increases in wealth, may be unwise enough to increase her marine. To the thirty sail of the line, which hover about St. Petersburgh, she may add thirty more; and set them afloat, like lemons in a large punch bowl, to flounder from side to side of the Baltic six months in the year, and be fast frozen the remaining six months, like so many geese in a caldron of pitch; stretching out their canvas to thaw, when the sun shines, and musing upon the mystery of sails and helms; and now and then, her Emperor may condescend to stretch forth the imperial ladle, and stir up the old Baltic into such a naval review, as shall frighten three parts of Europe into a dyspepsia. All this undoubtedly has its use, as well as its beauty, or the wisdom of the Russian Cabinet would not suffer it. But, we humbly opine, that the glory of the Russian navy will end where it commenced, in keeping undisputed possession of the frozen punch-bowl. And, therefore,

* The reader must not suppose I am unmindful of the existence of the forts Kronstadt and Kronschlott, and of the well-equipped squadron of thirty sail of the line, standing in the path. I have seen both, and despise neither. Nay, think there is quite sufficient difficulty and hazard to pitch the spirit of any admiral entrusted with the enterprise to that key of heroism which is necessary for the accomplishment of great deeds.

we cannot conceive that the chance of naval greatness is sufficient to justify her forfeiture of defensive advantages.

Now, whether, in order to the prosperity of her commerce, it be essential to Russia that the seat of government be upon the sea-shore, seems to me a question easily disposed of, inasmuch as commerce is shy of sovereign authority. It thrives best out of sight of courtiers; and is not advantaged by any increased residence of these at its ports. It requires only protection, and is in itself equal to all other contingencies. It is very true, that when the capital of a country is a sea-port, it will in most cases engross the greater share of the traffic of the country; because it is more easy for foreign merchants to dispose of their merchandise there than at a port distant from the capital; but it does not follow, that the traffic of the country is increased by this advantage of its capital.

Now, it is worth while considering, what would be the effect of uniting Moscow and St. Petersburg by a railroad, and making the former the actual capital. The railroad communication would bring Moscow within a day's journey of its sea-port. Several considerations are self-evident. The seat of government would be nearly in the heart of its most important dominions, and about 500 miles, or thirty-five days' march for troops, nearer than at present, to its southern districts. Russia would be impregnable. The presence of the Imperial Court in the heart of the most noble of the Russian population, would give a demand for luxuries to an extent at present unknown. This would increase traffic, which the railroad would so wonderfully facilitate. Instead of the commerce of Russia with Europe being that of her Northern frontier alone, the flood of commerce would rush to and from her very heart. Instead of the Imperial person being known only to his Northern subjects, it would now be familiar to the old families of Moscow,

and to the gallant Cossaqs of the three rivers. The valuable land bordering the Oorahl, would be brought five hundred miles nearer to Russia. So would the ports of the Caspian and the Euxine, and the capital would enjoy water communication with either sea. The South-west frontier would no longer be beyond the eye of timely observation, or the reach of timely succour.

Let us enquire what would be the moral effect of this change. Would it check the progress of civilisation? We think not. At least that it need not. But, instead of Russia coming into Europe, it would bring Europe into Russia. Instead of Russia condescending to the petty airs and graces of Europe, she might retain her own old habits and peculiarities, and add to them only what is really valuable. She might maintain at Moscow her dignity as Queen of Asia, which is forfeit at St. Petersburg. The intercourse of strangers would be that of guests with a host. Not of tutors with pupils. Russia, seated upon her ancient throne, would feel that she could confer at least as much honour as she could receive. The voice of Europe would be of less consequence to her; for she would be within reach of that of her own multitudinous nations, and no longer be an obscure fragment of Europe, but the sun of her own hemisphere. The Emperor, from being uncle, would become father of his people. He would dwell amongst them. They would look to him for succour from their petty tyrants. Their national reverence and affection for their Tsars would be cultivated and strengthened. From that point, from the magnificent beacon summit of the Kremlin, he could distribute to them the knowledge necessary to their happiness. He could prevent its monopoly by the class most formidable to his own power, and to the happiness of his peasants; and Moscow, the magnificent, the poetic, the renowned—she whom her peoples reverence as a mother, and respect as a saint—she would become the wonder of nations, the most glorious city in the world.

O think of that Kremlin as the site of Gothic palaces and towers, rising mass upon mass through the cloudless sky. The Tartar pyramid, the Russian cupola, the slender spire and crenelled battlements of the pointed order, all mingling and harmonising to one mighty effect. What an eyrie for the Northern Eagle. What a watch-tower for the father of many nations. What a landmark for the whole earth.

Is the picture overdrawn; are the colours those of fancy alone? Russia, believe it not. Believe in your own high dignity in the scale of nations, and more than this is possible to you. True, in such a state as Russia, all depends upon the impulse of the court. If that continues to bow to European fashions, the people will follow the example. But there is in the present monarch promise of better things. A spirit of chivalry, which is capable of higher aims than the fame of a review officer; and a nobility of mind that accords well with the character he might achieve as a second founder of the empire.

Difficulties I see, if indeed anything be difficult to the determined energy of a great mind. Objections, too, might be started. I would I had my friend Schickhardus at my elbow, that we might argue the point together. It is a fine sea of speculation. But I think I could establish my rock in the midst, even Moscow, as the beacon of nations, half Oriental, half European. With all the vigorous knowledge of this, and all the poetic adornment of the other. No longer with one foot on the sea and the other ashore: no longer mistaking a slop-basin for the ocean. But stretching her sceptre calmly over her own mighty element, and leaving the world of waters to the genii of the deep.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Use of the French Tongue amongst the educated Classes—Hospitality —Russian Physiognomy—External—Mental—Facility in acquiring Languages—Extreme Caution—Acquisitiveness—Consequences of her Character and Position—Foxy and Oxy.

IN the society of St. Petersburg I scarcely mingled. I had no introductions, and of course my existence was scarcely known. At table, French is always spoken in Russia; a very pleasant arrangement for strangers, and useful to diplomatists, but reprehensible as a general practice, owing to its tendency to separate the more instructed from the equally noble and worthy residents of remote districts, and to cause them to regard their own national tongue as barbarous, and eventually to include in the charge their nation and country. Accordingly, whenever a Russian finds himself in a crowd of his countrymen he speaks French; which is as much as to say, "I am a man of consequence, I am no barbarian Rooski. If I am not a foreigner, I am the next best thing to it, I speak a foreign tongue." The Emperor, it is said, strongly discountenances the practice. He is wise; for its extension would be the ruin of his country. What steps are taken to render the use of French unnecessary I know not. But the case is very urgent. The enlightened community must have knowledge. They will not be kept centuries behind the rest of Europe in this; and, unless premiums be offered for good translations of the literature of other lands (the demand not being yet sufficient to pay the translators), French must and will supplant the beautiful

language of Russia amongst the educated, and thus tend still more to degrade the unhappy peasantry of the empire.

Other travellers, whose opportunities have been greater, have minutely described Russian society and manners. Upon one point I have found no difference of opinion, viz., that the Russian loves strangers, and delights to show courtesy and kindness to guests; and, so far as my opportunities went, I should say, that whilst in other lands you will meet with great vicissitudes of kindness and boorishness, the Russian seems to be constitutionally kind, and habitually hospitable. The difference which struck me between our own and Russian life was, that whereas we make amusement a recreation, it seems in Russia to amount almost to an occupation. But even here I may be judging harshly and ungenerously, and mistaking the pains taken to amuse and interest the stranger and the guest for the general economy of life.

Of the purity of morals in Russia I am not qualified to give an opinion. Among the peasantry crime appears to be very rare; and the ancient feudal privilege of landlords over the brides of their serfs seems gradually fading away, although I was assured that it is still to be met with. The example of Catherine II. can scarcely be supposed not to have tainted the morals of the higher classes, to which Alexander's pernicious habits lent aid. But the present imperial family seem to be exerting a salutary influence, to restore what their predecessors have pulled down. As an individual, I saw nothing that could lead me to suppose the manners in Russia less pure than elsewhere. The privilege a Briton enjoys, of being held innocent until his guilt be established, he is bound to extend to strangers, and especially to those who have admitted him to their families, and given him abundant proof of virtue, but none of laxity of manners.

In drawing also a sketch of the Russian character,

I must warn the reader that my data are far from perfect, and that I believe there exists a very striking difference between the Russian and the Cossaq. The average stature of the Russian is much below our middle height; but he is well limbed and athletic, capable of supporting much toil, and inured to hardship and privation. His complexion is fair. The general colour of his hair is yellow, and he wears it cropped straight around his eyebrows. The beard is generally bushy, when it exists, but many have none at all, and it is the fashion of all of the better classes in Upper Russia to shave. I was told, that the beard denotes what is called an old Russian, i.e. one of the old religion, already alluded to; but I could not ascertain the point distinctly, and the number of beards I saw in Upper Russia made me suspect the correctness of the assertion. Of this, however, there is no question, that the old religion regards as impious the destruction of the beard, and that soldiers of this religion serving in the ranks are allowed to retain the appendage. The Russian face is a roundish oval. The cheek-bones are high. The forehead is steep and well developed. There is often great breadth of cranium, but I think not much prominence of individual points. The features are irregular, but not large. The lips are thin; the eye is small, grey, and rather deep set. The expression is that of good-nature, shrewdness, and caution. The gait of the Russian is slovenly. His manners, however gentlemanly, are seldom dignified. His extreme good-nature is in the way, and when, as in the army, he has got the better of this, his manner may be pert and rude, but wants dignity. There are, of course, striking exceptions to this rule.

The Russian character is made up of elements that do not commonly meet together to form a national development. He is clever, humorous, quick, has an excellent memory, and a peculiar facility in the acquisition of languages; my friend Schickhardus assures

me that it proceeds from the extreme difficulty of his own. A man, he says, accustomed all his life to swallow 13-inch shells, would make nothing of a 3-pound shot, which nevertheless would puzzle most gullets. He who can coolly ask, between two mouthfuls of dry biscuit, Miss Tchernicheff Tcherniavsky, of Meschtchansky, to take a glass of *port* wine, in words as long and limpid as the proper names; and without the slightest blueness of visage, or swelling of jugular and temple arteries—turn upon Count Scheremetieff, and ask him to walk to the Pretchistenka, or Souschtchevskaia, or Serpoukhovskia, or, if he prefers it, to the Vesdvijenskoi, or Nieskouschini, or Kroutitski—what would *he* have to apprehend in attempting the tongue of even a hedgehog, or a Welch porcupine.

The Russian has generally an ear for music and for poetry. But I am inclined to think this is commonest in Lower Russia. His accentuation of English is better than that of any other foreigner; and his own tongue, in his own mouth, is nervous and harmonious.

The strongest characteristics of the Russian, are principles of little power, good nature, intelligence, and extreme caution; and there is, perhaps, no nation on earth in which the family resemblance is so strong; a circumstance that, by ensuring unanimity of counsel, in many consecutive administrations, has tended, more than any other, to the prosperity of the empire. The good nature of the Russian is tempered by selfishness. He has more vanity than pride, more passive than active courage; he does not fear danger, but seldom finds, upon weighing it with glory, that the latter has sufficient substance to turn the scale; thus, although he will not fly, he does not see the fun of advancing; a circumstance, of which an energetic enemy will take full advantage. He is peculiarly fitted for intrigue, both by disposition and capacity; but his policy is always founded upon the principle of

winning without a stake. He is patient to an uncommon degree, never loses temper, nor relinquishes his point. He is, therefore, though often disconcerted, eventually the winner. His love of acquisition is never slumbering. He does not always reflect what is to be done with his gains, but would think more of a million, won from a neighbour, than of ten millions made upon his own estate. He is vain, not proud of his country; I mean, when not spoiled by foreign manners. Indulgent to his family. As a friend, I do not know that he is capable of great sacrifices, nor is he perhaps vindictive, as an enemy. The power of his character is found in its consistency. No warmth of fancy, no heat of temper, no discouragement of circumstance, ever shakes him from the even tenor of his design. Time does for him *surely*, that which fortune and daring precariously effect for others.

Placed, with these singular qualifications, in the very midst of a world of States, for the most part weaker and more divided than her own, every faculty has been exerted to extend the limits of an already unwieldy empire; and thus we see, that without incurring any risk of damage to herself, she has, since the year 1774, gained from

Tartary,	about	270,000	square miles.
Persia	„	70,000	„
Turkey	„	150,000	„
Poland	„	202,000	„
Sweden	„	80,700	„
	Total	772,700	„

of which about 438,700 belonged to the states of Europe, and form perhaps, at present, the most valuable portion of the Russian empire, increasing her population from fifteen to fifty eight millions. Has this contented Russia? It has been a mere whetstone to her appetite. In 1827, she would have

swallowed up Persia, but for the interference of Great Britain, and only last year (1840), upon pretence of a trifling expedition to release a few slaves, she had actually made a snatch at the remainder of Tartary, a little morsel of about 870,000 square miles, which would have brought her southern frontier to the Hindoo Koosh. She is, in fact, like some mighty tree in tropic clime. Silently and imperceptibly, every hour her bulk increases; not by fits and starts, but by a steady, and never-slumbering extension, that must either ruin herself or swallow up the whole earth. The nations of Europe, meanwhile, are lying, like some fat, lubberly ox, to whose spoils the fox has taken a liking. "What are you at there?" says the ox, lifting up his slow head.

"Only scratching a flea out of your tail," replies foxy; and the ox lays down his head, and begins to doze. Suddenly he jumps up in an agony. "What the shambles are you at, you scoundrel?"

"Don't you see, I've just pulled off a large tick; see how the lubber bleeds?"

"I do believe," says the ox, "you've bit my tail through."

"Bit your tail through!" says foxy, lifting up his fore paws and the whites of his eyes. "Did anyone ever hear the like. To think I'd be such an ungrateful wretch. Look at it man, look at it, and see, and then blush for your cruel insinivation," wiping his eyes with his tail, and sobbing. The ox looks, first at his tail, then at the fox, and then again at his tail. The tail is dangling by a filament, if he can believe his eyes; but the same eyes shew him the fox's passion of despair at his uncharitableness. There *must* be some mistake He takes a lick at the bleeding stump. Surely he *had* a tail when he lay down to rest. He determines to chew a quid of hay over the matter, and not to decide rashly. He chews, and falls asleep. He wakes with an excruciating pain in the ear. He opens one eye. He sees the fox

gnawing at the ear with all his might. *Now* there *can* be no mistake. He waits his opportunity. Makes a desperate kick, misses the fox, and gives himself a black eye. This is too bad. He jumps up in a fury, and runs full butt after the fox. The fox in an instant is in earth, and utterly intangible. The ox swears he will dig him out with his horns. He begins to turn up the earth. "What are you at?" says the fox. "You'll soon see," says the ox, turning on. "'Tis a troublesome business," says foxy, "shall I help you?" The ox, half suffocated with anger and dust, begins to pant. "I'll save you all that trouble," says the fox, "if you'll listen to me; only give me your word of honour (I suppose you can keep it) that you'll not touch me till you've heard me, and I'll come out to you." The ox considers. He remembers old cases, in which the fox, after stealing his goods, had stolen also his judgment; at the same time, he is too magnanimous to condemn him unheard, too fat to complete the ejectment, too lazy not to be glad of a plea for forbearance, and altogether too much tickled at once, and piqued, on the score of honour; so he gives his word, and out comes the fox, sits close to his nose, wheedles him into the belief, that he was born with but one ear. Lulls him asleep with flattery, and commences upon the other. I cannot conclude without an apology to the ox tribe for so injurious a comparison.

"Yes," said a Russian staff-officer to me, after recounting some of the diplomatic cajolery of his country, and laughing heartily at the old ox, "you'll see that we shall wheedle you into the admission of one of our armies into Syria. There we will entrench ourselves, with one eye on Turkey and the other on Greece. Ours they must be, sooner or later. You are no match for us in bamboozling." In fact, the position of Russia is so peculiarly suited to her genius, that this speech may be regarded almost as a prophecy. There is but one power on earth whom she

fears, or has reason to fear; and that power is the very oxen, the most gullible of all.* A war with that power would be the ruin of Russia; the dissolution, in all probability, of her empire. She cannot but know and feel this, and keeps clear of the horns. But every change of ministry gives her fresh hope. A point is gained from each, and many small points make one good cause.

* This was printed in Calcutta in 1841, and published in 1843. We have now been many months at war with Russia. The first event to be anticipated—viz., the death of the Czar, who forced his country into this insane war—has actually arrived. But if the papers are right in their statements, that our blockade of Russian commerce is in appearance only, we must not hope for anything but injury in war with a power dependent for her existence upon these outlets for her produce, and assailable only by rigidly caulking them up. The war might have been triumphantly completed without firing a shot, had this been done; but no sacrifice of blood and treasure will bring it to such a conclusion, so long as Russia can dispose of her produce by means of neutral bottoms. We have yet to see whether we shall, like the ox, desist from our enterprise when well blown; or whether we shall be wise enough to suffocate the fox, whom we cannot reach in his own earth.

CHAPTER XLV.

Review of the Imperial Guard at Krasno Celo—Infantry—Cavalry—Artillery—The Emperor's handling of his Troops—Sir James Wylie—Advance of 50,000 in close Column—National Anthem—Use of this Display.

I HAD not been long at St. Petersburg ere I received a letter from the aide-de-camp general, Count Benkendorff, inviting me, in the name of His Imperial Majesty, to a review of the Guard at Krasno Celo, a village about thirty miles from the capital. As the review was to commence at an early hour of the morning, I repaired to Krasno Celo the preceding day, and found there quarters, with every necessary of food, etc., prepared for guests by the Imperial order.

The following morning we found carriages of a variety of descriptions awaiting us, and were informed that horses were saddled for our use on the review ground. On reaching this we alighted, and had not stood many minutes, when His Imperial Majesty galloped up to me, touched his hat before I could raise my hand to mine, and finding out who I was, for he had not waited for Count Benkendorff to present me, welcomed me to his capital. My large epaulettes and plume had led His Imperial Majesty, probably, to suppose me an officer of higher rank: for there were several gentlemen present who were entitled to precedence. These were presented in turn. The address of the Emperor is princely, but at the same time soldierly. He is perhaps in person the finest, and certainly the most dignified man in his dominions. His height is above six feet. He is stout, but not to a fault. Bears himself like a king. His features are

regular, handsome, noble. He rode a beautiful black charger, of strength sufficient for his weight, and was by far the finest spectacle of the review; if we except the princesses his daughters, who were present as spectators the following day.

We were now instructed to mount, and by the hospitable attention of the noble Perroffski, I found myself supplied with one of the handsomest and most spirited animals in the field, which, however, was almost too much for one who had that day laid aside the sling of his right arm, and was still very weak in the left hand. I regret that I took no notes of the review; but the fact is, that it was still difficult for me to use either pen or pencil, and the manœuvres were continued for three successive days, from morning till night. We found the Imperial Guard, if I recollect right, in close column of battalions, the cavalry on the right. Upwards of fifty thousand men were here under arms. I minutely scrutinized the appearance and equipment of the infantry. They appeared to me small men, although they are picked from the army: but what was much better than height to a military eye, was the seeming uniformity of stature, the active and athletic figures, never encumbered with flesh, and never deficient in muscle, promising the greatest possible physical endurance. Their equipment was perfect. No display. But everything neat, simple, soldierly, made for the field and not the park. Their national colour, as is well known, is green. It forms a good, dark, imposing mass; to the eye of a painter, far finer than our scarlet.

The cavalry I did not examine at that moment, but may as well describe it here. The men are not large. They are of the height and make that any experienced mounted officer would prefer. The number on the field was about fifteen thousand. And so far as I can recollect, the regulars were cuirassiers, lancers, dragoons, hussars, and mounted grenadiers. The latter being a corps of swift-footed, yet heavy

infantry: an arm of which great things might be made by a skilful tactician.

The cuirassiers have crested steel helmets, of peculiarly ugly figure and cuirasses of steel, bright, black, or overlaid with brass. They are from the celebrated fabric of Zlataoost in Siberia, and formed of cast, and I believe, of damascened steel, interlaminated with pure iron: a mixture which is supposed to combine toughness and hardness in the greatest possible degree. They are very massive, and supposed to be bullet proof: but I, who have sent a light reed arrow, tipped with soft iron, through a heavy Bhurtpore scull cap, do not easily credit any stories of armour, that will resist an ounce ball, impelled by four drams of good powder. Undoubtedly, any cuirass will turn nine out of ten bullets: and more than this should not be attempted, in consideration both of man and horse.

The Russian heavy cavalry use a very uncouth sword, long, straight and tapering, and made for anything but offence; being too narrow for cutting, and too clumsy for thrusting. My impression in general was, that the arming of this branch of the Guard was a little overdone. Not one pistol in a regiment kills its man in the course of any action; and I doubt whether the carabine has ever *yet* been made much more effective. The fact is, that in battle, promptitude of movement and closeness of array are the qualities in requisition: and it is a mistake to suppose any man competent to the effective use of more than a single weapon. The lancer requires a sword, because his lance is liable to so many casualties: for instance, in a charge, if he wounds, he has no time to withdraw the weapon, and must quit it or his saddle, generally perhaps the former, leaving his lance to transfix, with its reverse point, his unlucky rear file. But, if the dragoon *must* have a second weapon to replace his sabre, I would give him a short cut-and-thrust sword or cutlass, in pre-

ference to the pistol, and would certainly never encumber more than one troop in each corps, with the carabine. An Afghaun horseman never thinks himself safe, until he has a long heavy matchlock with bayonet, a sabre, a blunderbuss, three long pistols, a couteau de chasse, a dagger, and four or five knives for cutting throats and dinners, besides a shield, and a complete rigging round his waist, of powder flasks, powder measures, powder magazines, bullet pods, and fifty nameless articles. He has evidently calculated upon fighting a whole regiment single-handed; but as, fortunately, none of his magazines are supplied with courage, he never has an opportunity of proving his utter helplessness, thus encumbered, before an enemy who carries only the sabre. The over-arming of soldiers is a remnant of barbarism.

The horses of the Russian Imperial Guard, taken in a body, are, I imagine, the finest in the world. I do not think any kingdom of Europe could send forth 15,000 cavalry, so perfectly mounted. I did not indeed, see a corps quite equal in this respect to the better mounted of our English army; but, whereas in other services there is generally a mixture of good and bad; here all appeared equally good. I did not observe one horse defective, or injured in any material point. Their average size seemed to me less, than that of our British cavalry. But perhaps this is rather an advantage. The proportion of cuirassiers is very great. Some regular corps of Cossaq lancers were in the field. I thought these the elite of the cavalry. There were also some squadrons of irregular Circassian and Cossaq horse, in their several costumes.

The artillery of the guard, divided into two branches, artillery of position and field artillery, is equally well mounted as the cavalry. But the guns appeared to me, too heavy for service in foreign lands. I had no one near me of whom to make enquiries about this arm. Several batteries were of

twenty-four pounder howitzers, an ordnance much affected by the Russians.

The Emperor commanded, at this review, in person. The second in command was the Archduke Michael, his younger brother, who bears a strong family resemblance to the Emperor. The Emperor himself was dressed like a General Officer, and was distinguishable only by his advantages of person and bearing. Many distinguished offieers were ou the ground. Count Benkendorff, Prince Tchernicheff, still a fine and handsome man, who, it may be remembered, was despatched to Napoleon's Court to make love, and penetrate, by means of it, state secrets; a service in which he was eminently successful, and surely the most agreeable by which honours were ever won. The ground, which is undulating and grassy, was admirably suited to display the manœuvres, and to give full effect to so magnificent an exhibition. Unfortunately such scenes will not bear description. We cannot kindle at the narration of a charge of fifteen thousand cavalry, when no foe is opposed to them. Nor does the measured tramp of the best equipped infantry, affect us with a sense of the sublime, when they have to conquer and kill our old enemy, Time, alone. Nor do salvoes innumerable of blank cartridges, bring back to us the fields of Blenheim or Waterloo. The detail of military manœuvres is very dull, and to the greater part of the world, unintelligible. I will therefore content myself with saying, that the Emperor handled his little command with his wonted skill. That the manœuvres were calculated, not only to display science, but to exhibit that animation and vivacity, in which the eye of the painter delights. That the fifty thousand there under arms, were by a series of well-timed orders kept in constant action, tending ever to one effect. That the sun, playing upon the arms and plumes and banners of this large and concentrated mass, stretching over every variety of level,

gave a glory to the scene, which cannot be describ ed That, so rapid were the manœuvres, that althoug h that day, a space of three or four square miles was covered by them, it was often difficult for a spectator to avoid the charges of cavalry and advance of the artillery; and that several times, the full speed of my beautiful horse was in requisition. That, in spite of this vivacity, there was no symptom of hurry, or entanglement; each charge, each advance, or oblique movement fitting into its proper place and moment.

As for the troops themselves, nothing could exceed the order and regularity of their evolutions. No faltering of ranks was to be seen, either in cavalry or foot. The Russian soldier is said to be cool and collected in action. He certainly is at a review. The inequality of ground presented admirable coup d'œils, and increased in a surprising degree, the picturesque effect. Masses of cuirassiers and lancers, charging up heights, and disappearing behind them. Others cresting ridges, or sweeping at speed through the valley, whilst the infantry grouped into squares was pouring out its fire around, or advancing in line with levelled bayonets. The artillery thundered from height and hollow. The whole gleaming and glistening with innumerable scintillations from arms and armour. It was such a sight, as seldom falls to the eye, even of a soldier; and the dust being laid by a recent fall of rain, there was nothing to disturb the view.

It continued three successive days, one of which was in part occupied by artillery practice. I confess, I did not think so much of this. No man values more than I do, weight of metal, under proper limits. But I expect to see its effect in something better than exhaustion of the physical powers of the cattle. I saw there an artillery, which I should have supposed at first sight, the most powerful in the world. I found it, in its results, no way superior to the

lightest of our Indian field ordnance; and I should have little scruple in pronouncing it unserviceable, from its enormous weight, in foreign lands, and distant marches. In fact, it appears to me the weak point of the Imperial Guard.

On the third day, the review was graced by the presence of two of the Imperial princesses, who occupied watch-towers, or rather artificial mounds constructed as such upon the ground. Being a stranger, I did not venture so near as I felt inclined to approach; and could only, therefore, perceive that their charms of person have not been exaggerated, an impression confirmed by subsequent observation.

I this day fell in with a fellow countryman, Sir James Wylie, head of the Medical Staff of the Imperial army. A veteran, who has been present in forty battles, and acquainted with all the most celebrated persons and events of the era most interesting to Europe.

The closing scene of the review deserves particular mention. After that the fifty thousand had marched in review order of open columns past the Emperor,—a movement which is generally the most interesting of all in these exhibitions, as serving to display in motion each several item of the force,—and after that the Emperor had embraced his brother, the Archduke Michael, in front of the army, and honoured another general officer by grasping his hand (a favour which, were I Emperor, I should reserve as the reward of victory), the troops were massed into one close column, and advanced in this form in measured time, chanting their national anthem. The effect was truly magnificent. The fall of fifty thousand pair of feet, the chime of fifty thousand manly voices; the electric sparkle of fifty thousand blades and sabres, closely ranged together; the dark, deep mass of life still rolling on, without confusion, like some tide of lava from the crater of Etna, so irresistible, so overwhelming,—nothing that I have ever seen or heard of, short of

actual conflict was half so sublime as this. The Emperor, surrounded by his staff, rode in front. The beautiful young Archduchess, in an open chariot, drawn by two superb white horses, took up a position ever in advance of the progressing torrent; and I joined the other spectators, to form a cortège around them. Their presence completed the spell. The presence of highborn beauty and grace on a field consecrated to the stern genius of battle, like some note of music rising by the power of its sweetness above the clangor of the trumpet, and enhancing the stormy joy of each martial sound.

We made our parting salute to his Imperial Majesty, and were dismissed. I rode home, meditating on what I had seen. Certainly I never had beheld an *equal* number of troops, equal to these in appearance. Nothing seemed made for show; all was serviceable in the highest degree, from the figures of men and horses to the most trifling article of equipment. And was that magnificent cavalry the very same which a handful of gallant Poles had so lately trampled in the dust, without reckoning their multitude? Was that firm, highly-disciplined, and perfectly-equipped infantry a portion of the phalanx through which the savage of the Circassian mountains yearly cleaves his way, knife in hand? They were, indeed, the very same. Nay, the Russians boast that their troops of the Line are superior, in all but appearance, to the Guard. This reflection gave rise to some speculation, which was rather fomented by a visit to our Minister Plenipotentiary, Mr. Bloomfield. There I found Prince Soctholon. He was evidently on a mission, the object of which was to persuade Mr. Bloomfield that Russia, without weakening her garrisons, can muster for the field four hundred thousand better troops than those whose manœuvres we had witnessed.

All this display, then, is no whim of a military monarch; it has its use as well as its beauty. If thirty thousand veterans are held at bay for ten years

by a few undisciplined savages, in a remote district, out of sight of the civilized world, yet at the capital, the eyes of Europe are dazzled by the most formidable displays of martial might. The powers of Europe think of the thirty sail of the line, always ready to take aboard the 50,000 of the Guard, and pass them into an enemy's country, without enquiring how the the thirty sail of the line are ever to get out of their old soup tureen; and whilst they are staring and funking at an army which Russia has not the slightest intention of bringing into action, if she can help it, Russia is quietly and imperceptibly sapping her way into the heart of neighbouring states. Her army is the caparisoned elephant, which a sportsman causes to be led fifty paces behind him, when he would get within shot of a shy Florican. The bird's eye is filled with the image of the monster which cannot harm her, and overlooks the more deadly gunner.

Was it with her army that she last year made a snatch at a territory of 870,000 square miles, the possession of which would have brought her fifteen hundred miles nearer our Indian frontier? Yes, with such an army as the weakest state in Europe could have furnished; with such an army as Europe regarded with sovereign indifference, as destined for some petty enterprise. Was it with her army that she despoiled Persia, plundered Poland, seized Courland, Georgia, Immeretia, Mingrelia, Finland? The army, indeed, was not without its use; it was flourished in the face of the victim, as the pistol of the highwayman, whether loaded or unloaded, in the face of the traveller, whilst the fingers of the former are fumbling for the purse. It is not to be supposed that nations, living in constant apprehension of a Russian invasion, will very vigorously oppose any of the schemes of gradual encroachment by which Russia is devouring distant provinces; and were not Great Britain concerned to obstruct her progress southward, the Russian empire would at this moment include the

whole of the Tartar and Persian kingdoms, for the integrity of which England alone would venture any considerable stake. Yet, if they would open their minds to conviction, they must be assured that such weakness is only deferring for a little while their own downfall; that every accession of strength to an empire that has risen, is rising, and will rise by the secret or open destruction of its neighbours, is so many years deducted from the span of their own existence, so much taken from the chance of their own escape.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Vesper Hymn—Tzarsko Celo—Virtue of an Epaulette—Fitting Dress of Kings—Dissociality of the Sexes—Female Society—Its Effect.

ERE quitting Krasno Celo, I visited, one evening, the lines of the Imperial Guard, at sunset. They are encamped upon a trifling elevation, and are all drawn up in front of their Lines, at this hour, for a species of vesper service. The Emperor and the two Archduchesses were present, and I approached them as nearly as I considered I might, without disrespect. His commanding person, which had so well become the review ground, was still seen to advantage between the fairy and graceful figures of his daughters. It is truly a noble family. In dignity, in virtue, in personal beauty, equally the first in the land. The Archduchess Olga, still unmarried, was absent with the Empress in Germany; I did not, therefore, see her. But her beauty is stamped upon every mind in Russia. She is represented, as too lovely for the earth, a creature, whom in gazing on, one expects to see wing her flight, to her native sky.

Fifty thousand men were paraded in line, in front of their respective positions, awaiting the signal of sunset, which is a rocket. The instant that had gained its highest elevation in the heavens, every band of every regiment of this large force broke simultaneously the dead silence that had prevailed, playing in a subdued tone, variously diminished by distance, the vesper hymn. Of all solemnities I have ever witnessed, this is the most affecting and imposing. The music itself swelling and falling in its own modula-

tion, and fitfully affected by the breeze of evening: now bursting into bold measures of melody, now subdued, until the most distant notes found audience. Now mingling and melting in unison, now clashing in partial contrasts not amounting to discord; but, ever solemn, dreamy as the hour; was almost more than the excited nerves could bear.

Fifty thousand warriors stood listening to that sound. It was the acknowledgment of fifty thousand soldiers, that they owed their being to the Almighty hand. The Emperor of many nations stood bareheaded in front, to represent the awe and reverence of fifty million of his subjects, for the Giver of every blessing.

With the decaying light of the sun, those notes, as etherial, as sublime, decayed and melted into profound silence. All felt, as standing in the immediate presence of the All-Holy and Supreme.

At Krasno Celo we breakfasted in our own apartments, but dined at a public table, where were assembled all the officers of the Imperial Staff, and all the guests of the review, which included all foreign ambassadors. Here, as everywhere, the unslumbering courtesy of the noble Perroffski, provided for my comfort. It had been one of my first objects on reaching the capital, to call upon him, and he promptly answered the attention. On one occasion, when, one of my over-blunt answers vexed him, he accused me of not understanding his character. I replied, that it was the character, in Russia, which I did most thoroughly comprehend. One that combined a love for his country with courtesy to a guest, and nobleness of conduct towards one whom circumstances might have justified him in regarding as an enemy, and from whom, he well knew, he could gain nothing but gratitude.

Amongst the guests were a major and two captains of artillery of the United States, sent to examine the various founderies of Europe, with a view to improve-

ment in those of America. They were gentlemanly persons. The major a dignified, and probably a talented man. Whilst talking of founderies, I may mention having heard at St. Petersburg of an iron ore, being discovered in Sweden, of such purity, that field pieces are cast from it of considerably less weight than brass guns of like calibre. This discovery may lead to valuable results. Unfortunately, the power of the oxygen of our atmosphere over iron is in proportion to its purity; the only circumstance that unfits cast steel for the purpose of gun metal: but which perhaps should not cause its rejection, as a material for field howitzers, in which it is so desirable to gain the greatest possible length of calibre consistent with light draught.

Amongst the officers of the Imperial Staff, with whom I found myself at table, were, Aide-de-camp General Count Benkendorff. The Minister of War, Prince Tchernicheff. The Chief of Staff and of Artillery, Prince Dolgorouki. General Perroffski. Sir James Wylie, Chief of Medical Staff. The Ambassadors of England, Austria, Prussia, Sweden. The Prince Galitzin, etc., etc., etc., in short the chief of the nobility of the empire, of whose names and titles I have no record.

I returned to Coulon's hotel, at St. Petersburg, bearing with me, assuredly, some novel and interesting impressions. My public business kept me a good deal a prisoner, during my stay here; and I therefore missed several objects of curiosity. One day, I went by rail-road to Tzarsko Cælo, celebrated as the favourite residence of Catherine II., and the scene of her debauchery. The grounds are almost too flat for beauty, and the palace has no architectural merit. It contains a room wainscotted with amber. Is said to be handsomely furnished, and floored throughout with mosaic of great beauty, of which one room is of mother of-pearl. Unfortunately it was closed, and I did not think of trying the key of silver, by which

with difficulty I obtained entry into the armoury, an exquisite collection, although not extensive. Some Grecian helmets of bronze, etc. struck me with admiration of their elegance. There were some fine sabres, etc., and a suite of horse caparison, covered with brilliants and table diamonds of great size and value, a present from the Sooltaun. The rest of the items have escaped me: but, I thought this exhibition of arms far finer and more select than that of Moscow. The grounds, in spite of their flatness, afford an agreeable ramble, being well shaded with trees. In the public gardens of this place, we found an excellent band, which had gathered a large concourse of listeners, some of whom were promenading, others refreshing themselves at the café. I was a little puzzled for the distinctive marks by which a gentleman might be known. It appears to me that, in Russia, they are not so obvious, as in some other countries. I often appealed in vain to my companions, but could get no information. Military uniform and orders seem to be the only badges. Undoubtedly, there are exceptions in persons of polished manners, whom we at once recognise.

The first thing asked of me on seating myself at the side of any perfect stranger, was, "Pray, sir, what rank does that epaulette belong to?" This question made me stare at first, but it evidently was not intended to be boorish, I only laughed in answering it. My uniform, indeed, nearly disordered the intellects of several persons; especially when they were told that my military rank was lost in my civil function; and when I mounted it to visit the Minister, all the guards of the capital were in an uproar. It is the uniform of the diplomatic service in Afghaunistaun, where finery is at a premium.

In Russia, a pair of epaulettes is a pair of virtues. If they have bullion, they are angelic. If the bullion is that of a general, they are divine, and worshipped accordingly. They are worn, as well as the cocked

hat, whenever the owner goes abroad: a hardship upon a service so miserably paid, and one that renders the life of an unlucky subaltern as shabby as his exterior is smart. The Russian officers are not becomingly dressed. I saw not one handsome uniform at the review. The cocked hat especially is miserable; and the plume, whether green or white, resembles the tail of a cock who is undergoing salivation. I confess I thought it bad taste in the Emperor to wear a military uniform. It is so levelling a costume. It confounds the sovereign at once with thousands, who are generals through the longevity of dulness. An emperor should have a dress peculiar to himself. It need not be gaudy, but it should be distinct. The ancient garb of his native land were the most appropriate. But if it be not distinct from all others, it should be distinct from that of any profession. The simple dress of a gentleman, of whom the king is but the chief.

Although myself a military man, I was a little disgusted with the homage paid to military rank. So long as my epaulettes were up, the deepest deference was mine: but when I laid them aside for a silk travelling surtout, I could scarcely procure any attendance at the inns and post houses; and it was fortunate for me that my companion, Pekoffski, wore his uniform. At a little inn, near Vladimir, a gentleman and his lady, a beautiful young creature, drew up in two travelling carriages. They were journeying in much better style than myself. His exterior was prepossessing, and he was handsomely dressed. He also wore the cross of an order at his button hole. He was such a one as a fat English innkeeper would have bowed to with the deepest reverence, and would have sat upon, until he had squeezed out of him a pretty penny. He had, in short, a thousand virtues, but he had one crime; he was a civilian, and a retired civilian; and here he was regarded with a neglect amounting to insolence; and had I not interfered in

his behalf, would not have been able to procure the commonest refreshment for his wife, or for himself; far less, horses for the continuance of his journey. Perhaps, the position of his sweet and interesting wife, whom I saw sitting, neglected, in the carriage, and could not persuade to alight and partake with us, may have made me unusually indignant: but, I confess I felt some disposition to be ashamed of my profession as a soldier, when I perceived the value set upon the distinction by every ignoble mind. The scorn of such, we regard with indifference, but their homage is humiliating.

In passing afterwards through France, I thought that this also being a military government, a military garb might be useful. But I rather think it is there synonymous with poverty, the full odium of which is better understood in an overpeopled land than in a land still rich in the necessaries of life. In England, the rareness of the costume gives it consequence, excepting at military stations. In Italy it is respected, and in Greece detested, as confounding its wearer with the abhorred Gothic locusts of the land.

Every traveller appears to be struck with the separation of the sexes in Russia, in their pursuits and in their recreations. Some attribute it to the influence of military discipline, extending itself into even the social circle, and depriving the junior grades of the army or civil service, of freedom in offering attention to the ladies and daughters of those of higher rank. There may be some truth in this. Military etiquette does act as a restraint, and a strong one. But the origin of the dissociality is Asiatic. Amongst the natives of Afghaunistaun and Persia, women are seen by men only in their private apartments. They go abroad, indeed, but so closely veiled that their very feet are concealed, and their husbands cannot discover them. At Khiva, the same strictness prevails in cities; but the Toorcumuns do not, because they cannot *conceal* ther women, although they will not eat with

them; and their pursuits and arrangements are quite distinct. Amongst the Kuzzauks the same system prevails. The women, however, are less shy of strangers, and the prejudice is evidently wearing out as we progress Northward. The Cossaqs, or Christianised Kuzzauks of the Oorahl, do not seem to admit their women into the social circle. At least, I never found them there. The reason assigned to me was, that their ladies not understanding French, nor being much accustomed to the society of strangers, were reluctant to meet me, lest I should report them barbarous. The real cause is a remnant of Asiatic prejudice, which leads the sexes to separate rounds of recreation. This the Russians have not entirely lost. The ladies have no bashfulness, and set a stranger at his ease at once; but they are frequently left out from the social circle; and, I must say, I think a party of *he* creatures, one of the dullest of all dull and barbarous methods of torturing time.

What *can* a man bestow upon a man, in compensation for his own thoughts and fancies, which the presence of a second person interrupts? Can he give him idea for idea? Can he wander with him through the realms of the beautiful and imaginative? Are any of the dull thoughts we hear expressed by dull lips, in a circle of males, to be weighed against one moment of tranquil or excited fancy—to be weighed against our intercourse with nature and with solitude. But, the mind of woman is a lute ever attuned to our own. We cannot sound a note of thought, but it is swelled into beauty and power by an answering chord. Her mind contains all that is wanting in our own. It is not another mind, it is an essential faculty, without which ours is incomplete. We reason by it: we soar upon it. It is a key which unlocks many an unknown possession of the heart. Rather, it is a summer breeze unfolding upon the steppe long-buried flowers. When we meet her, life commences. We cast from us the coils of our mortality. We feel the presence of her

sweet spirit stirring within us. The fountains of thought, of feeling, of fancy, are unsealed together; they gush forth in unison, not always in words, but ever in delight. Sometimes words are an impertinence. Sometimes silence is the most eloquent of music. The presence of our own sex ever causes dissonance. It is not the winding of the breeze through the labyrinths of the shell; but the harsh clash of the cymbal, or the stroke of the hammer on the anvil. True, there are some with whom such strife is glorious. But how few are they. How many males do we meet with, in our passage through life, whom we would condescend to admit to a mental tournament. How many do we find, who, to the gift of speech add the delicacy of tact, necessary in a listener. One is all matter of fact, another all fancy, a third all memory. The first proses you into a lethargy. The second, as you are about to cleave him to the chine, melts into thin air. The third appeals to fact upon fact: you doubt the accuracy of each, but are a thousand miles from any public library.

But with woman we have no reserve. We fear not to be taxed with display in revealing our strength, we have no shame in acknowledging our weakness. She is never a rival, but a sister. Our thoughts, inspired by her presence, have ever some kindred with her own. The difference is not discordant. It tends to variety, not confusion; to the brilliance of the electric spark, without its shock.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Posture of Russia—Designs in the East—Consequence of gaining Persia or Khorussaun.

I AM approaching the term of my farewell to St. Petersburgh, and shall defer its record, only to speculate a little upon the extraordinary position and prospects of Russia. The extreme interest and importance of the subject, to every state in Europe, will perhaps plead my excuse.

It was whilst I was lost in admiration of the beautiful display at Krasno Celo, that an ambassador of one of the European States joined my bridle. This is a magnificent army, he observed.

"Very magnificent. I have seen nothing so fine."

"It would be still finer," he said, "if it had legs."

This observation gave rise to many reflections. It was true and obvious; but the use made of it may be various. It may either lead neighbouring States to despise the military resources of Russia, or it may serve as a key to the policy which has enabled her already to swallow up one third of Europe, and great part of the barrier between herself and India.

What may be the views of the several cabinets of Europe upon the subject, it is not for me to hazard an opinion. But the world in general are divided into two parties; those who live in dread of a Russian invasion, and those who disregard her growing power, because she is not yet, as an open foe, formidable to the balance of Europe. Now both these positions are false. Russia is a young state; neither her fangs nor her claws are grown. If they were, she would

not display them. Yet young as she is, she has outwitted all her seniors, has, within the last sixty years, cribbed a third of their possessions, quadrupled her population, trebled her revenue, begotten her navy, marched seven hundred miles upon Paris, five hundred upon Constantinople, six hundred and thirty upon Stockholm, and one thousand upon India. Such a power can be despised only by those who have not intellect to comprehend achievements so wonderful.

Many of those who are awake to her formidable aspect, on finding that she keeps up an army of a million of soldiers, and a fleet of some forty sail of the line, look for the employment of these mighty resources, in some overt invasion of neighbouring European States. But this never has been, and is not the policy of Russia. I might almost venture to assert, that it never will be. She is far too sagacious for that. She plays not for empty glory, but for gain. She knows that the knocking together of heads leads always to bruises, but seldom to anything more profitable. She asks France, what she has gained by the victories of Napoleon. England, what have profited her Cressy, Poictiers, or the glory of her Marlborough. Sweden, for the fruits of Charles' heroism. Prussia and Austria, the result of their murderous wars. She has not the slightest desire to see a confederacy formed against her. She is, perhaps, aware that her rising power is well enough known, to render such a confederacy general. That Austria, Prussia, perhaps Sweden, would join it from apprehension; France from hatred; England from policy. She knows, moreover, that at present she is not equal to a vigorous war. That, though intangible as a military power, either France or England could close the chief doors of her commerce, ruin her revenue, and awaken discontent throughout the land. She knows, that she has built her throne over a slumbering volcano; that her very army, officered by foreigners, is a compound of sulphur and nitre. That the credit of any con-

siderable State could occasion a revolt amongst those nations who abhor her yoke, and languish to be free. That she has a national debt, and no national credit. She has some suspicion also, that she has no genius for war. Has a shrewd guess, that she was nearly going to the wall, but the other day, before a handful of armed peasantry, and that thirty thousand of her veterans have been worsted during the last ten years, by a few undisciplined mountaineers, whom she persists in calling her subjects, because they drub her.

Knowing all these things as well as we can tell her, Russia has no idea of engaging in serious war. On the contrary, she had much rather make peace and treaties with her neighbours; cherish and protect them by her presence; put down for them the revolts she has stirred up, and like a generous cuckoo, leave them each a couple of her eggs, as pledges of disinterested friendship.

Now, it is because Russia will not engage in serious war, that Europe ought to dread her. It is because keeping her hands ever free, her eye ever open, her wits ever on the alert; never dazzled by airy castles, never tempted to any considerable hazard, never discouraged by any number of checks, she bides her time, she sows her seed of discord, she watches the year, the day, the hour, the sign, the conjunction: springs not, until failure is impossible, nor whilst the capture of the weak may embroil her with the strong. It is because this system is inseparable from her counsels, grafted into the very genius of her nation, and favoured by her national gifts, and local phenomena; because, by it she has already grasped a a third of the dominions of Europe, and part of Tartary and Persia; and it is because it is a system which pre-engages success—it is therefore that Russia is an object of just apprehension.*

* This, which was written in 1841, I will not alter, because it is virtually true, although Russia has at present overreached herself, and

War is a game of chance. The weak have their occasional triumphs. Accidents, incalculable by human prudence, disconcert military movements, and turn victory into defeat. Were Russia once to be tempted to such folly, half our just apprehensions were annihilated. It is because she will neither provoke nor give plea for war, that she is so truly formidable. She is in Europe, as a young forest tree within a conservatory. Every leaf is tranquil, she seems hushed in slumber and innocence. No eye can conjecture the exact day or hour when her limbs will rend the fragile roof; but the skilful gardener knows that to save the building, he must timely lop the boughs away,—must meet with the knife every protruded shoot, or root out the young giant from its cage.

Having once got the key to the policy of Russia, the case is not so desperate. We may even take a lesson from this youngest of our sisters, in the employment of a standing army. I do not mean that we should learn from her the system of aggrandisement of which it is the instrument, but we may learn, that war is a mighty blunder amongst nations. We may also preserve, with the utmost jealousy, that line which at present forms the Russian frontier on the West and S. West, and regard the slightest infringement of it by Russia, as an aggression upon

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involved herself in hostilities which she had not the remotest intention to provoke. The invasion by Russia of the Turkish empire arose in the strong assurance she had received from all her foreign agents that England would wink at the atrocity; that France, from internal discords, was powerless to oppose it; that Austria, from gratitude, would acquiesce, and Prussia from cowardice. The cowardice of Prussia is one of these assurances confirmed by the event. And it is certain that had Lord Palmerston been Minister for Foreign Affairs at the time, the invasion would have been deferred to a more convenient moment. The high-spirited Emperor, accustomed to look upon himself as a god, had become too far involved to retreat, before he perceived the vigorous opposition awaiting him from Great Britain. It was then utterly impossible to recede. The counsels of Nesselrode, the sagest of the Russian ministers, seems to have been ever opposed to this deviation from the cautious policy heretofore pursued by the government.

Europe in general, and rather enter into hostilities with her, than suffer her, whether by fraud or force, or on plea of friendship, to overstep a limit which she has already pushed far enough into her neighbours' territories.

We *may* do this: but shall we? Alas! there is in the disunion of our councils, and in the consistency and unanimity of hers, but too good reason for her to hope, that if she can only avoid a serious war with the European powers, and hold together for awhile her too extended empire, she will wheedle us out of our remaining possessions, pouch Europe, pocket Asia, grab Africa; and having stuck herself full of plums and suet, the elements of a rifled world, fall into a thousand shapeless particles, like an over-rich plum-pudding.

The idea of a Russian invasion of India has, since the settlement of European discords, been the theme of speculation. That it has been so in Russia, as well as in England, there is no doubt; but that the Ministry should have thought of it seriously, as the undertaking of the present day, is absurd. Russia has full possession of her wits. She does not seize a bull by the horns. Whatever exaggerated opinion she may entertain of the prowess of her army, she can scarcely feel any very great pride in her Commissariat; and she cannot be ignorant, that such an undertaking, to give hope of success, would involve an expenditure far exceeding the utmost limit of her funds and her credit, and prove her utter unmitigated ruin if it fail. She can also scarcely consider, that whatever the funds sacrificed, she has more than one chance in a hundred of success. But that she *has* the design ultimately in view, is as certain as that a false step on our part may give her reasonable prospect of success. Last year, whilst we were enjoying a cosy nap in our feather beds, muffled up to the nose in patent blankets, and gently tickled by fair professions into elysian dreams of friendship, Major Todd,

our envoy at Heraut, found a little shoot of this mighty empire, amounting to ten thousand men, growing quietly toward the Hindoo Koosh, and carrying with it the southern boundary of the Russian Empire, i.e. bringing it nearer our Indian possessions by one thousand five hundred miles, and annihilating the most important part of the barrier between the States.

His care, vigilance, promptitude, and self-devotion, have for the moment prevented the consummation of the threatened evil. But are we satisfied, that the blindness with which we suffered this advance upon our Indian possessions will never recur at some future moment, when we have no watchman upon the frontier, equally accomplished, equally ready to stake his name and reputation in the cause of a grateful country.

How nearly, in 1827, Persia had been swallowed up by Russia is well known. The consequences of such an accession to Russia are perhaps lightly regarded by many. They see that Persia is a poor country, and they will not take the trouble to consider that the iron, which it is not worth our while to forge into any implement of our own use, may yet be worth its weight in gold, if by its redemption we can prevent its becoming a thunderbolt in the hand of a rival.

But let any other glance his eye at the map of Asia, and consider coolly the consequences of Persia being added to the Russian empire. With it the whole of Tartary must lapse to Russia; and what is of far more consequence to her, than the acquisitions of inland country, she would possess a sea-coast in the Indian ocean, from the mouths of the Indus to Bussora. Here she would, undoubtedly, establish a fleet to guard her trade with China, and we should require another, to keep her in check. The enormous accession to her revenue, through the avenue of commerce, would enable her to equip expeditions which at present she cannot think of.

The following quotation from an able and useful work, entitled "Progress and present position of Russia in the East," will come in well here:—"Fifty thousand Persian infantry, composed of what are, perhaps, the finest materials in the world for service in those countries, and disciplined by Russian officers, with about fifty guns of Persian artillery, in a high state of efficiency, and an almost unlimited number of irregular horse, could be put in motion by Russia, in any direction, within twelve months after the resources of the kingdom were at her disposal; and the acquisition of such an influence as would enable her, in the event of a war with England, to induce Persia to take part with her against us, would at once give her the complete control of the military resources of that country."—See p. 120, Madras edition, 1838.

But we fear that a reference to the map is too often followed by such remarks as the following:—"There is a wide space between the Russian frontier and the Persian Gulf. It will be time enough to think of these things when the danger is more imminent." Let him who makes this reflection be assured, as a little examination of the facts must assure him, that it is but a single step from Russia to the Persian Gulf. A step that may be made in a very few months, and without serious opposition; that it will be made, the very instant we withdraw our active influence; and that being made, it will be irretrievable.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Past History and Future Prospects of Russia.—Growth of her Power.—Policy of Peter the Great.—Partition of Poland.—The Baltic and the Crimea.—Necessary Neutrality of Austria and Prussia.—Policy of Nesselrode.—Mistaken Policy of Nicholas.—His Designs upon Khiva.—Failure of the Expedition to Khiva.—Russian Views of Asiatic Conquest.—Russian Notion of Aggrandisement.

THE past history and future prospects of the Russian empire afford a theme of engrossing interest to all who are alive to the present condition of the balance of power in Europe. Others of the sister states have been gradually matured in power, as in civilization. They are fragments of that massive iron sceptre beneath which the world has for ages quailed; the metal of which they are wrought was purified of its crudities beneath the hammer of a Cyclops ere submitted to this final process; hence the tenacity of particle, that has enabled each separate sphere to sustain unbroken the shock of ages, to retain, almost in original bulk and undiminished weight, the form imprest upon it, despite the numberless convulsions impelling those spheres together in the rudest contact, and of the occasional success or disadvantage of some ambitious or of some feeble state, forming together a complete system balanced in all its parts—the centrifugal force of ambition nullified by the centripetal of jealousy. To Europe the history of a thousand years has been but as a cycle to the planetary orbs; the close has found their eccentricities corrected, their orbits unshaken, their balance restored. A single planet, alas! has been lost from the sisterhood, to be mourned too late, alike by two of the unprincipled Sororicides, whose avarice blinded them to the inevit-

able result, and by all the more innocent, whose timely and active sympathy might have saved her, as the natural shield of Europe, from the barbarous hordes of the frozen world.

But Russia has no such common history amongst the states of Europe. Her origin and her course are those of some magnificent comet; her orbit is beyond the bounds of our system; it extends to regions unvisited, to limits lost amid the wastes of another hemisphere—to the trackless steppes of Tartary, to the lifeless waters of the frozen sea. And her future destiny, like her present grandeur, mocks the calculations applicable to European states.

We of the Old World, who mark her portentous aspect, are naturally disposed to dictate to her the future by the measure of our own experience of the past. We see her already mistress of a limitless and ill-compacted empire, yet spreading to the overflow of adjacent nations, who, one by one, are swallowed up and absorbed in the ever-widening deluge. We, who with difficulty hold in order and subjection our petty plots of ocean-rescued soil, see this Queen of Nations yearly adding to her overgrown domains tracts more extensive than the realms we govern, and beyond proportion better peopled and cultured than her own. Her immediate neighbours behold this progression in abject terror, which precludes all thought of vigorous opposition; and they who view it from afar confidently prophesy, from the experience of past ages, her immediate or ultimate ruin.

Why a mighty empire, rich to excess in territory, and comparatively poor in revenue, whose population is in the lowest stage of civilization, whose lands, with the highest capability, are for the most part waste and unproductive, whose subjects require instruction alone in order to compete in manufactures with the first on earth, yet whose revenues are still raised upon the sale of raw products, to be manufactured by other nations, why such a nation should deem it wiser to

increase her too extended territory by robbery of the lands of neighbours, rather than apply her great energies to the improvement of her overgrown possessions, is a mystery apparently so irreconcilable with the sanity and reputed sagacity of the Russian cabinet that a few pages may be profitably employed in its solution.

Russia, on the accession of Peter the Great, was one wide and desolate steppe, bounded, indeed, on two sides by the ocean, but by an ocean affording no channel to commerce, no outlet to communion with the world beyond—the frozen ocean of the Arctic pole and the scarce less frozen ocean of Eastern Tartary. Her position was the most hopeless that was ever contemplated. She had no population, no revenue, no manufactures, no commerce, and seemed precluded by position from ever attaining such endowments. The first move of her great liberator was toward the ocean, not so much to the half Asiatic Euxine, then the exclusive property of Turkey, as to a more immediate inlet to Europe—the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea. Having carved for his country this air-hole in the vast avalanche beneath which she was buried, Peter gave his country her first lesson in that lore which she has ever since so successfully pursued. He laid the foundation of her fortune, of her existence as a state of Europe. In conquest, and by conquest, she has advanced herself from absolute insignificance to a power and an attitude calculated to excite distrust and jealousy amongst the most potent of the sister states.

The conquests of Peter, though all important to his country, were, in respect of area, but a small portion of the foreign acquisitions of Russia; those of his successors comprise the most valuable territory at present possessed by Russia, being a belt of land averaging about 300 miles in width, and stretching from the Polar Sea, south by east, into the kingdom of Persia, a distance of 2800 miles. They are her most valu-

able possessions, because nearest to the centre of civilization, and enjoying for the most part a better climate, a denser population, a more cultured soil. They are above all valuable to her, as having been, time out of mind, the western walls of her frozen prison, and as being now her means of contact with the world she has recently invaded.

Can it, then, be wondered that Russia, who owes to plunder her very existence as a European state, should cling fondly to the art to which she owes her being? Is it wonderful if, in this thirst for foreign conquest, her emperor, her cabinet, her serfs, her army be found of one common mind. Hers have not been barren conquests, bought with lavish blood and treasure, and yielding in return but the fruitless foliage of the laurel; hers have rather been the inroads of the famished northern wolf into the fold of the peaceful peasant. No risk, no danger, no glory; but fatness for leanness, and, for the agonies of famine, a heart merry with the good things of the earth.

Other states may have found in foreign conquest only embarrassment and distraction in their civil polity; but the conquests of Russia have been kept with comparative ease. The tracts she has won are adjacent to her own frontier; they are severed from it by no natural barrier; the most important, Poland, is conterminous with the heart of Russia, and is further guarded in allegiance to her by the jealousy of her sister robbers, Austria and Prussia. Hitherto she has not been sensible of the danger felt by other European states in grasping at neighbouring possessions; and her empire is already so extended, that the addition to it of a few hundred thousands of square miles of territory does not startle her as an idea involving peril.

Other states of Europe, when they become objects of jealousy to the majority, are exposed to attack on all quarters of the compass. But Russia is so much more capable of injuring her neighbours than they are of molesting her, that it is only when aroused to the

struggle for existence, that either Austria, Prussia, or Turkey will take a step to resist her encroachments. By the rest of Europe she is tangible in two quarters only—the coast of the Baltic and the Crimea. In both she has lavished all her skill and resources, to render them impregnable; so that the conquest of either, without hearty aid from Austria and Prussia, must now be problematical.

But even should Austria and Prussia throw off their cowardly paralysis, and join heartily in the confederacy, the Allies may, undoubtedly, destroy the navy of Russia; wrest from her, for awhile, the Crimea and the Southern coast of the Baltic, and drive her back along her western frontier. But even then, Russia, though sorely discouraged, is not necessarily subdued. She falls back from her cultivated possessions to those boundless wastes, where she alone can find subsistence, and whither no army can follow her, for good. If she submit, it is from no fear of destruction; but merely to gain time and opportunity.

It is, probably, apprehension of this, of being abandoned, at some future time (when Russia has found the states of Europe dis-united) to strive single-handed with a power so guarded by nature against humiliation and overthrow, that causes both Austria and Prussia to hold aloof from this glorious opportunity of checking the Northern Robber.

Dread of the liberation of Poland renders it incumbent upon one or other of these powers to make a shew of combination with the confederates; and on Austria this part naturally devolves, because the active influence of the Allies might revolutionize that already shaken empire. But it is not probable that either will incense, by actual hostility, the power whose shadow dwells upon their spirits.

Since, then, Austria and Prussia will neither heartily aid the good cause, nor give us a plea for making the war a war of Europe against despotism,

which were the simplest solution of the knot; there remain the alternatives of attacking, at much risk and disadvantage, the two assailable horns of our enemy, or of starving him out, by the most rigid and uncompromising blockade of his ports.

We have seen, already, what the system of active hostility is likely to cost us. Its worst effect, however, seems to be this, that it rouses the spirit of the Russian nation, by forcing it to act on the defensive. It gives a colour to all the false proclamations of the Autocrat, that he was acting in self defence, and that we are the aggressors. A simple blockade, and the protection of the Turkish frontier, might well create a revolution throughout Russia; whose existence depends upon the freedom of her outlets, and whose exports are far too bulky to admit of land carriage.

In the preceding chapter, I have said that Russia will never overtly invade any European State. I have reprinted this statement, pretty much as it was made by me in 1841; because, although the fact has proved otherwise, the opinion based upon her past history and known policy, was essentially correct, and the present case is an exception into which the Czar was misled, in the belief that his army was marching, not to war, but to the almost peaceful seizure of a defenceless empire.

It is well known that the most sagacious member of the Russian Cabinet, Count Nesselrode, was strongly averse from the advance of the Russian army. He saw that time was not yet ripe for such a harvest. That it was a deviation from that code of policy which had hitherto ensured success to almost all the enterprises of Russia. But the Emperor was wilful. He had all his life long been drilling his magnificent guard, until the success of his arms against an unseen enemy, encouraged him to esteem himself a hero in good earnest. Many years had he impatiently waited for an opportunity to devour Turkey. As for that power resisting his armies, the very idea seemed an

absurdity. But France and England continued at peace with one another, and with the rest of Europe. Meanwhile old age was fast encroaching. The tyrant of tyrants was at hand; and Nicholas had still no fame to bequeath to posterity, but the credit of having been a handsome man and a smart review officer. He had the choice of anticipating the complete ripening of events, or of leaving to a successor the glory of establishing a third Russian capital upon the Bosphorus.

What a despot ardently desires to undertake, he will find many a slave ready to pronounce safe and practicable. Nicholas continued to swallow the assurance that the present conjuncture was favorable to his project. That, for a bribe, Great Britain would allow the spoliation. That France, on the brink of a fresh revolution, could not interfere. That the Austrian Emperor, restored to life and existence by the breath of himself (Nicholas) and held upon his ricketty throne by the same fostering care, could not thwart him; and that Prussia would play her usual part of the jackal, in the approaching conquest. A sager man than Nicholas might have been deceived by the signs of the times, and by the vehement assurances of Menschikoff. The army accordingly advanced. The voice of Great Britain, in her anxiety to avoid a quarrel, was less peremptory than it afterwards became. Nicholas chose to read in it a confirmation of all his presumptuous hopes. His army continued to advance; nor was he satisfied that she was in earnest, until it was impossible to withdraw in honour.

Thus the present aggression of Russia is no disproof of her consistent and determined policy to avoid, in her encroachments, a European war. The army of Turkey, which has so gallantly given the lie to her contempt, she regarded as a thing of straw. And, undoubtedly, the valour of the Turks would have availed them little in a protracted struggle, single-handed, against the resources of Russia. The personal ambition of one man (and he the Autocrat),

deluded her into the belief that the hour was come, when, consistently with her old policy, she might swallow up another state, without the penalty of war. Those who had studied the history of Russia confidently predicted, that the author of so much mischief and misery to his country would not long cumber the throne. And Nicholas has gone to render account of his doings to the King of kings. By what means he departed we cannot say. We know, only, that he is one of a series of Czars who have made themselves scarce when they could best be spared; and that the throne of Russia is no life insurance to the Autocrat, whose will runs counter to the opinion of his ministers.

The enormous advantages to Russia of such an acquisition as European Turkey are too obvious to need comment. Austria and Prussia would become mere provinces of her empire, so long as that empire should hold together; and they would not dare refuse her the aid of their armies for further conquests. Nor could France, unless gifted with another Napoleon, long resist her aggressions.

But, although this acquisition be of paramount importance, we should not forget that the hand of Russia is even stretched to grasp those wide tracts of Asia, which sever her from India and from the Persian Gulf. The failure of her attempt upon Khaurism (Khiva), in 1839-40, is attributable chiefly to the premature development of the expedition. General Peroffski, the Governor of Orenburgh, had promised the Emperor possession of Khiva in seven years. He required that period to make friends among the wild tribes of Kuzzauks dwelling upon the steppe, 900 miles wide, which severs Russia from the cultivated tract of Khaurism. Of this period five years had expired, when our arrival with an army at Cabul was announced, and the presence of a British envoy at Heraut. Nicholas argued, that in a few months we should have formed upon that frontier such combi-

nations and alliances, as would either prevent the advance of his arms, or embroil him, in case of advance, with the British Government. He sent Peroffski orders to hurry forward the expedition. Peroffski, unprovided with camels sufficient to supply his army with water upon that arid steppe, commenced his march in winter, that he might have the benefit of the snow to slake their thirst; if, indeed, this extreme hurry was not ordered by the Emperor, in order to anticipate our movements in that quarter. The winter was unusually severe, and the expedition failed. I am far from asserting that it would be practicable during an ordinary winter. The steppe, although lying so far south as 43° to 51°, is at that season connected with the North pole by an uninterrupted sheet of snow, no lake nor sea intervening, excepting the frozen sea of the Arctic regions. Even at Khiva, which is on the border of this snowy waste, people are every year frozen to death. Certainly, if the horsemen of Khaurism should do their duty, any attempt of an army to cross that steppe in winter must be futile. On the late occasion, the troops of Khaurism behaved in the most cowardly manner.

Since that expedition one or two depôts, so far as I can learn, have been established by the Russians in advance of Nuov Alexandroff, on the route to Khiva. By this route an army has only 360 miles of steppe to traverse. And the main difficulty anticipated by the Russians is in a supply of transports sufficient for the army and its stores—a difficulty which, at the time of the last expedition, was deemed insurmountable. If, however, it be true that the Russians have built depôts on that route, there can be little doubt that vessels have since been constructed. The power of Russia is still feeble upon the Caspian Sea, which is to other seas what the steppe is to the fertile provinces of Europe. The commerce there does not pay for the maintenance of many vessels; and it would be necessary to build a fleet, for the express purpose

of invading Khaurism. Depôts of troops cannot be established on the Eastern shore of the Caspian, owing to the ravages of the scurvy there, and to the utter destitution of that coast of grain, fodder, and fuel.

That Russia, amid all her speculations, should not have stumbled upon the objection so urgently opposing extensive conquest, is scarcely to be credited. Had she not herself hit upon it, thousands of foreign tongues have cast it in her teeth. It may be well, therefore, to consider, what might be her own plea, for an unlimited extent of territory.

"My advancè upon the Gulf of Persia, brings me into contact with no nation, whose inroads or jealousies I shall need to dread. The deserts of Khaurism, the Caspian Sea, the wilds of Afghanistan and Mukraun, will form my eastern frontier, the sultry deserts of Arabia, my western bound. My peaceful professions, the just dread your people feel of adding to the already ruinous weight of taxation, by any avoidable war, would secure me the voice of a powerful peace party in your cabinet, until my fleets should be equipped in the Indian Ocean, and my mariners expert. Then, Great Britain will have much more cause to dread me, than I can have to fear her. I am the young and growing state, she is old and must decay before me.

"I have already added to my empire 800,000 square miles of territory, and a population of 30 millions. Has it weakened an overgrown frame? Has it weakened my treasury, my army, my navy, my commerce; the perfect subordination of all parts of the empire; or the awe which I inspire in the states of Europe?

"Yet, those additions are far more considerable in proportion to the estate to which they were added, than Persia will be to my present empire. The conquests, which, according to the theory of my antagonists, were to decree my fall, have raised me

from the lowest grade in Europe, to mate with the highest of the sister states. If other nations have fallen by a grasping ambition, it is because they wanted the position or the genius to make good their gains. We have precisely the genius, and the position, for such a purpose. We quarrel not with the strong upon questions of honour. We can afford to wait a century for the redress of a grievance. That redress is no doubtful victory on the battle-field; no exchange of shots, with equal chance of harm to the aggrieved as to the aggressor; but it is a deliberate, plump, and lusty slice of our adversary's wealth; the award of our calm, quiet, never-slumbering prosecution of our own interests, and of his disadvantage. We take not a step by military violence, which can be won by pretence of protection or alliance. The world can no more help the growth of our empire, than it can help the gradual encroachments of the Ocean upon its various continents and isles; here it may erect a dam, and there a pier, and save for a moment some miserable fraction of a kingdom; or, like Xerxes, it may lash, if it please, with chains, the surging waters that laugh to scorn its idle and impotent displeasure. But the wasting process is unintermitted, and the continent swallowed up, can never be disgorged.

"Of Persia, we have already devoured an area of 75,000 square miles and a population of 3 millions. These are now accustomed to consider themselves Russian, and will, a few years hence, be more firmly of that mind; and then we will take a million or two more. Our march upon the Persian Gulf will be delayed or hastened, as the pulse of the times may dictate. It is as certain as any decree of fate. You cannot oppose it in Asia, and you will not in Europe. Your divided counsels have not a chance against our unanimity. What voice in the councils of Great Britain have they, who, from knowledge of Eastern politics and geography, can be alive to the tre-

mendous consequences of our establishment upon the Persian Gulf?

"As to danger from extension, we laugh it to scorn. The ancient philosopher wanted only a sufficient fulcrum in order to lift up the world. That fulcrum we, and we alone, possess, in the unassailable character of our empire. Nature, on three sides, has rendered us intangible. She has given us in Austria and Prussia, slaves to protect our western frontier by the might of their cowardice, and we have rendered the few assailable points beside too hazardous of attack to be attempted by sensible men. Thus empanoplied by nature, art, and the cowardice of our neighbours, with fingers touching on all sides the territories of weaker states; we have nothing to do but to bide our time, and help ourselves slice by slice to neighbouring territory, whenever France and England are not at leisure to oppose us. When Europe is on her guard, we make free with Asia. And when obstructed in Asia, we revert to Europe. The lands gained, are like the successive largess taken up by a snowball. They do not encumber with their weight, but rather increase our motive power by enlarging our axis.

"Our system is calculated for an unlimited etxent of territory. The absolute will of a monarch, who, without cause assigned, can raise up, pull down, or destroy at pleasure, is felt as forcibly on the borders of Persia as in the very streets of Constantinople. The movements of governments, civil and military, monopolise the mental culture of the empire. The government has in its employ the mental powers of the people. Revolutions are, therefore, difficult; for those servants leave, as pledges, families which would ill like to be transplanted to Siberia. The addition to our empire of such a kingdom as Persia would not affect the economy of our system. The springs and wheels of Government would work precisely as they have worked the last hundred years.

The accession would make us, beyond a doubt, the first power on earth; and that, a rising and increasing power, before whom all others must gradually decay. You suppose that your interference arrested us in 1827; but the real fact is, that it is contrary to our system to grasp too much at a time. Had we then taken Persia, it would have cost us infinite trouble and difficulty to keep, and, perhaps, a war with Great Britain. When we take it in earnest, it will be an easy prey; and Great Britain will have enough to do to look after her own affairs. But we have not forgotten her presumption in stepping in before us. We treasure up the remembrance as a debt to be discharged hereafter.

"Other states have, every twenty years, a new legislator, who warps their policy to suit his own views or those of his wife or mistress or poodle. The spirit of Peter, which created Russia, will rule for ever over her counsel. Our emperors, however wilful, dare not deviate from it materially; for there is one point in which every Russian living is agreed, it is the greed for foreign acquisition, not to be won by arms, but by stratagem. It is thus, that in the physical world, the grandest and most durable designs are effected. Time is the most potent of the levers of Nature. Ours is the only state on earth whose genius is fitted to act for centuries upon one consistent plan: to wield, in short, this magnificent lever. Ours, therefore, is the only empire to which no limits can be assigned upon the chart of the world."

There is much that is plausible in this argument, and sufficient to account for the unslumbering extension of the Russian limits. But we trust the reader does not suppose that we acquiesce in the soundness of the argument. It may be well to show us what a dangerous adversary we have to contend with, and how much wisdom, watchfulness, and promptitude are necessary for the purpose. But, although Russia may, perhaps, extend her bounds in our despite, it is

almost certain that the addition to her empire of either Turkey or Persia, would very soon rend it asunder. As yet, foreign conquests have not disturbed the consistency of the fabric, because all the dense and solid substance is wrapped around her heart. The feeble and lose texture of her distant provinces render them perfectly unmanageable. But Constantinople would become a third capital. The weight of a province more rich and populous than the heart of the empire, in direct communication with the civilized world, from which that heart is excluded, and separated from the heart by so many hundreds of miles, would inevitably rend the empire asunder; and the same effect must follow the acquisition, by Russia, of the Persian kingdom.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Remarks on St. Petersburg—River Nieva—Bridge—Lodgings—Beauty of Rooms—Vehicles—Horses—Mr. Chicachoff—Departure—Travemunde—Lübeck—Postilions—Hamburgh—Passage to Hull—Aspect of England—Summud Khauniana.

I RECEIVED a second invitation to a review of the Imperial Guard, but certain considerations led me to decline it. Indeed, the mind that can be amused by more than three days of mere manœuvring must be somewhat vacant.

My Afghaun follower, Summud Khaun, was very much out of element here. I took him to several exhibitions; but could not always have him with me; for he felt too proud to occupy a servant's place in the vehicle, and, unless the case was urgent, I could not admit him to my side. I discovered, however, at St. Petersburgh a Tartar merchant who spoke Persian, and this man behaved hospitably to him. He was one of the principal shawl merchants of St. Petersburgh. Summud Khaun was one day visiting him, when her Imperial Highness the Archduchess Marie entered, to make purchases. Hearing that an Afghaun was in the house, she summoned him before her, and made some enquiries of him. I asked Summud Khaun what he thought of the Princess. He declared she was an angel, in person, voice, and manner.

At St. Petersburgh are several shops, on a scale of great magnificence. One of these in the Niefski, held by an Englishman, contains such an assortment of rare and beautiful goods of all kinds, as I imagine is not to be met with in any London warehouse.

Amongst these, boxes and vases of malachite are the objects which first attract the stranger's eye. An enormous mass of this ore is to be seen in the collection of minerals; it was found in the Siberian copper mines.

In general the shops in this capital disappoint both in number and appearance; a single street of the many that are in London, exhibits more merchandize than the entire capital of Russia. I visited the principal café, but thought it very inferior to those of Moscow. Nevertheless, St. Petersburg is a more beautiful city; it is not so disfigured by hideous churches and tawdry colours; there is less smartness and more gentility. The magnificent Nieva, always full, always flowing, always vying with the crystal in purity, and with the sky in azure, is a feature which Moscow wants, whose Moskva scarcely deserves to be called a river, and is scarcely taken into the account by a visitor.

The Nieva, where it divides opposite the centre of the city to form the islands about St. Petersburg, gives one branch of exactly the breadth of the Thames at London, but about double its depth. The remaining branches are of various size, but all are beautiful; and the islands formed by them are shaded by woods, interspersed with elegant and most delightful country mansions. During the summer, St. Petersburg is deserted of a large part of its population poured into these islands, which during winter are said to be untenable owing to excessive damp: they are six in number, connected by bridges of boats. The eye is disappointed in finding no bridge of iron or of masonry over so beautiful a river, at the capital of so magnificent an empire; but there are causes for this. The great depth of the Nieva renders the undertaking difficult, and the ice which is borne down by this river in Spring from the lake Ladoga in enormous masses would greatly endanger the fabric. It would be requisite to give, not only great solidity to piers of such height, but also a very considerable span to the arches,

lest they should become choked by accumulated ice; and in a climate subject to such violent extremes of temperature, an arch of wide span is ever a precarious structure, owing to the contraction and expansion of its substance. A chain bridge were perhaps the most proper for the Nieva, and would form a fine object in the view. It appears that, many years ago, a peasant invented a wooden bridge for the purpose, of which the arch was to pass above the causeway, the latter being suspended beneath it. The model bore every test to which it was subjected; but no criterion can be formed of the strength of a bridge built of wood from the stability of its model; and wood exposed to the weather must be a very perishable material at St. Petersburg. During the winter, nature throws her own crystal bridge over the stream, and no artificial aid is requisite. Whether the banks of the Nieva contain strata within reach of the mason, capable of sustaining the gigantic abutments necessary to a chain bridge of nine hundred feet, I cannot say.

A system prevails in St. Petersburg which to a stranger appears extremely uncomfortable. A family hires, not a house, but a story, or so many rooms of that story; old residents live in this way. It is, of course, so far economical, that beautiful and highly furnished rooms may be had for the price of ordinary apartments, when it is necessary to hire a house; but the sacrifice of the independence is great. The door cannot be left unlocked; and if, when the owner quits it, no servant happens to be at hand, he must carry the key in his pocket to the great disgust of any friend or member of the family who may wish to enter during his absence.

I was much struck with the beauty of the rooms at St. Petersburg. They are better proportioned, larger, and loftier than ours in London; the floor is of polished planks, air-tight; the ceiling is elegantly painted; the wainscot is sometimes painted stucco, sometimes of painted planks. The number of large mirrors is

annoying to an Englishman, especially as no two give the same reflection: one making the face merry, another making it sad, a third giving it a triangular distortion, as if grief were pulling it one way, and mirth the other. They add, however, much to the appearance of the apartments.

I have said little of the vehicles used in Russia. The fact is, I was very gradually introduced into the throng of carriages, and therefore was less struck than a traveller arriving at St. Petersburg from England by their singularity. The ordinary travelling carriage has been already described. It is far less easy than an English post-chaise, but probably more equal to the wear of Russian roads, and tear of Russian postilions. As the Russian delights to place as many horses abreast as possible, he lashes a pole, roughly hewn from the forest, on either side of the splinter-bar, and by this means drives abreast from four to six horses. This saves a postilion, and keeps the inside of the vehicle plentifully manured. A late traveller in Russia mentions the case of a lady who received a cast in the eye from the cast shoe of one of these horses. The shoe, fortunately, was deadened in its force by first shattering the lamp.

The carriages of this fashion used in travelling are often of great length; in fact, the longer the shaft, the easier is the motion. They are also generally constructed with small wheels, which greatly increases the draught, and subjects them to much additional annoyance from dust. But in cities the English chariot and carriage are common, as well as the britska. The rich drive always four-in-hand, the leaders being separated some six or seven feet from the pole-horses. This fashion is very graceful to the eye, but, of course, renders the team sufficiently unwieldy. The Russians prefer black and dark-bay horses, colours which seem to be commoner in Russia than elsewhere. I was assured in England by a horse-dealer that our horses are picked for the Petersburgh

market, and that, in consequence, very few black or dark horses are left in the country.

The Drôshki is the commonest vehicle for visiting. It is a pole, supported at the extremities by the axles of the wheels fore and aft, springs intervening. A saddle-formed seat is fastened upon the pole, upon which the rider sits astraddle, his feet resting upon steps or supports on either side. To this one, two, or three horses are harnessed; but, as it has shafts, the second and the third horses fling all the spare dust of their heels into the face of the occupant. The central horse is spanned above the shoulder by a high arch of wood covered with leather, to which the bearing rein is fastened, and to which bells are generally hung; there is no screen against either sun or shower. It is an absurd conveyance, and economy alone can be its recommendation. It is not uncommon to see a gentleman sitting astraddle upon the Drôshki, and a lady sitting sideways in front of him, a species of approximation which thunder-struck Summud Khaun, who, after ejaculating, "Lah! Hôl!" added, "I wouldn't have believed it." This Droshki is sometimes modified into a long-backed vehicle, upon which eight people can sit *dôs à dôs*, their feet resting upon boards on either side; this vehicle also has no awning, It is convenient under clear skies, and in countries where there are temptations to pic-nics; but, as when fully occupied, five horses are requisite to draw it, it is subject to the insufferable nuisance I have more than once alluded to.

The sledge of Russia was not in use during my visit. It is formed by taking the axles from the shafts and body of the ordinary travelling carriage or car. Travelling in winter is much more speedy than at other seasons. The horses being all at home, and not occupied, as at other times, with the plough, about an hour is saved at each stage; and, instead of attending to the curvatures of the road, the traveller fixes his eye upon a distant mark, and makes straight over the

country upon it, not enquiring whether it is a ploughed field or the Volga that lies beneath him. Delays at ferries are in this manner avoided; and the surface of the snow generally offers less resistance to the sledge than is offered to wheel carriages by the roads of Russia.

The post horses throughout Russia are small, but hardy; and there is, I believe, no country in Europe, England excepted, where travellers can move with so much celerity. The Diligence, between Moscow and Petersburg, is the only vehicle of this kind, that I heard of. The wide steppes of Russia afford nurseries for a variety of different kinds of horse. The regular cavalry is supplied from the pastures of the Don and Volga: a breed of good height, end elegant form, rather active than strong, but capable I should suppose of much service. The galloways seem to be bred universally in villages throughout the country, as well as in the rich pastures of the Oorahl. The horse used by the gentry of Russia struck me as being a smart, compact, and pretty animal; generally small. I enquired at Orenburgh the price of a beautiful cart horse, which in India, would be worth 200*l*., and I was told I might have it for 10*l*. The Russians did not seem to me to be fond of riding, or generally much addicted to field sports. Coursing is said to be their principal amusement. At the review, I observed that officers' saddles were adjusted nearly mid-way between shoulder and loins, which appears awkward to an English eye, and is a decided error. In riding post, the Russian sits always the off horse. This brings his bridle hand equally between the two bits, and gives it more command over the mouths of the horses, although the near horse escapes, perhaps, his share of the whip; but the great delight of the Russian is to drive five horses abreast at their full speed, over every inequality of surface. Of course the emulation thus produced, at times amounts to frenzy; and no human arm can bear the strain of five horses in

this state of excitement. In spite of the inconveniences arising from this system of harnessing, it is a beautiful sight, that of four handsome and spirited horses, harnessed abreast, and bearing a light chariot at full gallop. All these remarks are meagre and imperfect, in consequence of the want of notes taken on the spot. I have since visited many countries, and my memory of Russia has lost the vividness of its colouring.

A day or two before I left St. Petersburg, I was much gratified by the re-appearance of my kind friend, Mr. Chicachoff, who had just returned from his visit to Astrakhan; and the day I left the capital, he again called, to renew his proffers of assistance, which he did not confine to mere profession, exerting himself actively for my comfort in departing, and attending me to the vessel. This is genuine hospitality, a rare and beautiful virtue, and nowhere so happily cultivated as in Russia. It was a source of much regret to me, that the briefness of my interviews with this gentleman, prevented me from benefiting as I desired, by the varied information and enlightened views of one, who has both read and travelled, and who has enjoyed the singular advantage of comparing deliberately and leisurely, the system of liberty (verging towards licence) of America, with the vigorous despotism of his native land.

I now took leave of him, and of my gentlemanly and kind companion Pekoffski, to whose unwearied attention I am so much indebted, and whose merits will, I trust, not be overlooked by the considerate eye of his noble commander. I then embarked on board a small steamer, which conveyed me to the larger vessel, lying below the bar. The passage to Travemunde was prosperous, the sea was smooth, no land was visible. Summud Khaun was delighted with steamers. He walked the deck, and I acted as his interpreter. Every one shewed him attention. The Austrian ambassador, a gentlemanly and unaffected

nobleman, lighted for him his pipe. He declared that all boats but steamers were blunders. On landing at Travemunde a large crowd collected to see him, and begged of him arrows, of which he had a quiver full, as curiosities: and in travelling by land from thence to Lübeck, and from Lübeck to Hamburgh, the population of the country was all agog at his appearance. We amused ourselves in watching the faces of the boors, as he loomed in sight, squatting upon my baggage, which accompanied us in an open car. The first expression was that of wonder, slightly mingled with fear, which gradually softened into mirth, and then degenerated into laughter. Each village and hamlet poured forth its inhabitants to gaze, wonder, and laugh; and Summud Khaun didn't know whether to consider himself an owl or a phœnix. The horses of the good people of this district go at the rate of about three knots an hour. The postilion sits his horse like a dragoon, with whip carried as a broadsword. I once or twice endeavoured, by promises and threats, to accelerate this dead march; but perceived, that I might just as well endeavour to instil music into a drum, as motion into one of these dull lumps of matter: I therefore wisely desisted.

We reached Hamburgh in the course of time, and found it as described, one of the nicest little towns in the world; having pleasant suburbs, a fine open square, good hotels, a never-failing throng of gay figures, and many lovely female faces. In the evening I saw the Robbers murdered at the theatre (tit for tat); visited the church, which has a noble spire, one of the loftiest in the world, and took my passage in the Tiger steamer, bound for Hull. We sailed under bad auspices, for we found two ships just wrecked at Cuxhaven, and the wind was on the increase. I looked at evening on the sky, and foretold a storm; but the captain, an old sailor, would not take the word of a landsman. It came, however, in shape of a tight gale upon our larboard beam; a point

of assault awkward for a steamer, inasmuch as the lee paddle is lifted out of the water, and all the *onus* of its progress falls upon a single paddle. The German sea is particularly beautiful when agitated. Its waves are fierce and savage. It boils up like a caldron. Our excellent steamer, handled by an experienced seaman, weathered the gale without losing her course, and we reached Hull in good time.

It is not easy to describe the sensations with which we first gaze upon our native land, after long and hopeless exile. The predominant feeling, perhaps, is despair at the want of sensibility to appreciate the blessing in its due extent; at the want of power to believe in the reality of that which has befallen us. I felt this, in an especial manner, for my mind and spirits were quite exhausted, and no longer susceptible of pleasurable impressions, nor longer equal to the demands of emotion. I was not the being that had left India about eighteen months before; my very nature seemed changed. I was astonished at the calmness with which I looked upon the coast of England; with which I placed foot once more upon her strand. I contrasted this indifference with the intoxication of delight I had experienced, as a child, on returning from a short absence to the same shore; and the contrast was mortifying.

Having despatched my business in London, I left Summud Khaun at Morley's hotel, after having provided, so far as possible for his comfort. He occupied a garret, up four pair of stairs; and the servants' hall was sunk two pair of stairs below the ground floor. I took him to the servants' hall, myself, that I might explain to him what he was to do, and introduce him, as he could speak no language of Europe. A lady's maid was at the dinner table. I told her that my steward would share her meals with her, and expressed my apprehension, that they would scarcely be able to understand one another's speech. "O," she said, primming herself up, "I don't know that, Sir."

"What," I replied, "can you speak Persian or Pooshtoo?"

"No, Sir, but I understand a little French. I've travelled."

On returning from my visit to the country, Mr. Morley met me at the door of the hotel, and said, "I'm afraid, Sir, there's something the matter with your Eastern gentleman. We haven't seen his face, since the day you left London. I'm afraid he's offended at something. I've been obliged to send him food to his chamber, for he won't come down!"

I with some difficulty ascended to the top of the house, and endeavoured to open Summud Khaun's door. But it was locked and bolted within; and it was not until I had repeatedly knocked and called, that any answer was returned. At length he opened the door, and I found him within, weeping like a child. For a long time his only answer to my enquiries was "Shookkur," and a hunch of the shoulders. At length he burst forth. "You told me, Sir, that when I reached London all would be right. That here I should enjoy myself; but I have found no place so bad as London. I shall starve here."

"You certainly will, unless you take the trouble to eat. Why have you not been to dinner?"

"I'll never go again, Sir! I would die rather."

"Why what's the matter? Who has offended you?"

"No one has offended me; but I can't eat under ground. I was coming up stairs from dinner, I trod upon the skirt of my cloak, fell down, and broke my tooth against the steps. I'll never go to dinner again."

Nothing could shake this resolution, so that I was obliged to buy him biscuits, sweet cakes, and fruit, for the rest of his continuance in London. At length, I contrived to find him quarters in the house of a wealthy and respectable farmer in the neighbourhood,

Mr. Gunner, of Alton, and took him by railroad to Farnborough, where I procured a post-chaise to Alton. It was night when we entered the train: he had never previously seen one. When the engine commenced its preparatory hiccoughs, he was alarmed, and asked what was the matter. I explained to him that it was only the snorting and pawing of the fire-horse, which was impatient to be off, and he was satisfied. In the morning, we passed in the post-chaise over some lovely country. Gentlemen's houses and grounds extending on either side in an unbroken series, the green valleys and richly wooded heights, the gardens with their fruit-trees; above all, the hedges trimmed to the density of walls of masonry, all struck him with astonishment. "The English," he said, "are a wonderful nation. If they can make such a paradise of their country, what *would* they not make of mine?"

I was amused at the preference he gave, to an arid, miserable confusion of naked rocks and stony plains, over the beautiful country before him. But an exile's feelings are the same, whether he be banished to a paradise or a desert.

"There is one thing," added he, "in which your country equals mine, you have no pigs."

We were at that instant passing over a common in Hampshire, and the words were yet on his lips, when turning round he perceived that we were in the very midst of a large drove of swine. He was utterly confounded, and cut short his encomium upon England with "Lah Hôl! This is the very mine of the unclean beast." The kind and worthy people, to whom Summud Khaun was indebted for his quarters on first arriving at Alton, took the utmost pains to render him comfortable. An excellent bed-room was allotted him. The garden was open to his use, and great care was taken to drive the pigs out of his way, when he crossed the farm-yard. He speaks yet with much affectionate respect of the lady of the house,

and declares she is the most estimable person he has ever known. The word Bae (pronounced Boy) is a term of respect used to the wealthy in Toorkistaun, and equivalent to Squire. Wishing to be very civil to his landlord, he used to address him always as "Gunner Boy," which, I imagine, Mr. Gunner thought at first rather patronising.

CHAPTER L.

Renewal of Impressions—Thames of Remembrance—Of Fact—Private Dwellings—Elegance of Churches—St. Paul's—Summud Khaun's Impressions—Population of London—Merchandise—Thames Tunnel—British Justice.

IT is a strange thing to re-traverse scenes familiar to early remembrance, that have become new, by long absence from them—that have continued unaltered, or nearly so, whilst our mind has been expanding, our ideas have been multiplying, our taste maturing. Objects start up before us, that have an established and time-honoured place in our estimation—that have served us as standards of beauty or of excellence. We have measured by them the products of many lands. We have said to each object of interest or curiosity in turn, "Ah! thou art beautiful, or thou deficient," according as it agreed with the model of our early remembrance; and suddenly that model confronts us. It stands before us in all the sharpness of its well-remembered outline, in all the vividness of its detail. Feature by feature, we gather up the impression. Reason acknowledges that this is the dye which struck it. Yet it fits not into place. Its dimensions are so shrunk, its proportions so dwindled, its hues so material, we are ashamed to acknowledge what we dare not disavow. We find, in short, that we are living at the same moment two separate existences—the actual and the ideal; the one before our eyes, the other within our heart. We are bewildered and confused; we walk as in a trance; we have suddenly recovered our long-lost identity, and we know not how to dispose of it.

It is certain, that in this state of feeling we are much more disposed to find fault than to admire. Rather, we are over jealous of the beauty and the value of objects which we have long treasured in our thoughts, until we have learned to identify our own fame with theirs. And, therefore, if any of them appears in undiminished splendour, we may accept it as a genuine triumph.

How fresh in my remembrance is the impression made in olden times by the Thames, as I descended the stairs at Greenwich. That river, the largest I had ever beheld, ruffled by the wind into waves, that dashed restlessly against the granite steps. That chill of the air, or rather, perhaps, of the blood, produced in cold climates by the aspect of large bodies of water. Those vessels, which, in spite of the disparaging terms applied to them of brig and collier, were to me the mightiest of moving things; and those rude, rough, surly, hoarse-voiced figures that crowded up the stairs, as if Neptune had just landed a crew of Tritons. Where were all these now? I looked for them in vain. Steam had annihilated the race of Tritons, and experience had caused the glorious river to shrink into insignificance. In place of it there appeared—what? O ask not; be content to learn what it resembled. A fat scum, from the cauldron of a soap-boiler, slipping greasily along, between the fatter mud beneath and the scarce less fat atmosphere above. And into this kennel, the metropolis has with one accord risen to thrust all the refuse of its buildings and population, mustering in the most conspicuous of situations a beggarly profusion of vile hovels; so that the squalor of the metropolis may be gathered at a glance. Often, when speculating at a distance from home upon the possibility of uniting all the conveniences of traffic with many of the adornments proper to the capital of a mighty empire, I have imagined a road, raised upon columns and arches of cast iron, along the borders of the Thames, above the

present quay, so that all the business of commerce might be carried on below, whilst the people were provided with an esplanade, which should not only afford them a promenade and a channel of communication, but hide beneath its vault all the mean and disagreeable objects that at present litter the strand. But I confess, that the sight of the Thames now satisfied me of the wisdom by which its vicinity has been shunned by all possessing liberty of choice.

I approached St. Paul's with some misgiving. I had, in former days thought more of its grandeur, than of its architectural merits. The faint and miserable glimpses obtainable of this monument had not enabled me to study it with attention. When I now reached the top of Ludgate Hill, and stood confronted with the façade of this magnificent Cathedral, I was for a long time lost in admiration of its excelling beauty. I visited and revisited it. But the impression was not deadened by the frequency of my visits. I summoned back to remembrance all the monuments I had ever seen: but none would bear the comparison for an instant. I have since visited many cities, but I have met with nothing so sublimely beautiful as the façade of St. Paul's. I was not prepared for such admiration. I had never heard its most exquisite architecture vaunted. I believe that it is scarcely known what a treasure London possesses, buried beneath a confused heap of miserable shops and dwellings. The very obscurity of the atmosphere seemed to me, as I gazed up to the columns, piled tier upon tier, in all their graceful proportions, to the skies, to lend an additional impression of sublimity to the view. I did not regret that it had blackened the freestone of the building. No freshness of hue is necessary to a structure so perfect in the harmony of its effect. But the mist which cuts the dome, and is pierced even by the towers of the façade, reminded the eye of the gigantic dimensions of a monument whose beauty alone we were disposed to remember.

What a glorious monument is this—lost—buried—forgotten. The name of its great architect scarcely known beyond the limits of his native soil, whilst the blunder of Michael Angelo has filled the world with *his* fame. St. Paul's is beautiful, in so far as Sir Christopher Wren confided in the resources of his own genius. It is deficient, only in as far as he took hints from the Cathedral of St. Peter's. The peculiar form of dome adopted by Michael Angelo, is the least impressive of all, and certainly not the most beautiful. It hovers, in fact, between the spire and the dome: has none of the bold swell of the latter, and wants the sublimity and delicacy of the former.

Who ever visited this noble Cathedral without boiling indignation at the want of taste of a nation that can suffer it to lie obscured by the rubbish of the capital. Millions are yearly spent in the visits of the English to foreign climes for the study of architectural monuments, whilst within their gates, the wonder of the world is rusting, dishonored, unnoted, and unknown. This is the more shameful and lamentable, because a comparatively small demolition of the surrounding buildings, would disinter this glorious temple.

I took Summud Khaun to visit this, and several of our principal churches. It may be easily imagined, that his astonishment and admiration were excessive. But when he learned that chandeliers of St. Paul's were not of solid gold, but merely brass, he was disappointed. "At the theatre," he said, "I saw the most magnificent chandeliers of cut glass: and in the house of the Almighty, you hang dull tawdry urns of brass."

"Very true," I replied. "The theatre is built for the use of man, who is delighted with vain show and splendour. The ornaments of the temple of the Most High are justice, mercy, purity of intention, and humility. With such offerings we seek to furnish our Churches."

I made him observe, here and elsewhere, that the

statues were not admitted into the aisle set apart for Divine worship: and explained, that in allowing them place in our sacred edifices, we designed them as mementoes to the Living of departed spirits, who had adorned their nation and the human race by their virtues and great deeds. That, to be admitted after death to this solemn and noble legion, was the great ambition of every Englishman, worthy of the name. I explained to him the history of each hero, statesman, or author; and why, in making religion the spring of every virtue and the loadstar of every talent, we deemed the temple dedicate to Divine worship the suitable shrine of such illustrious models of human genius, valour, and worth. I was careful not to admit him into any church, chargeable with the bad taste of images or pictures in the aisle where service is performed. I had no wish that, as the only Afghaun who had ever visited England, he should give his nation the idea that we worship idols.

The whispering gallery at St. Paul's was the highest point to which I could persuade his caution to accompany me; and his petticoats were sadly in his way as he ascended. The sculpture at Westminster Abbey impressed and astonished him more than the architecture. "What is your secret," he enquired, "of liquifying marble?" He would scarcely believe that the flowing drapery, the breathing figures, chiselled there, were produced without some chemical process for melting the stone. Indeed, until he had repeatedly fingered the statues, he persisted in affirming them to be of wax.

But, undoubtedly, the most astonishing thing to himself, as to all strangers, was the teeming population of the metropolis. That mighty tide of Being, so deep, so measureless, so strong, that rolls ceaselessly through the vast arteries of the Queen of many nations, with a throb, with a rush, with a hoarse voice of power that overwhelms the fancy, as it dazzles the eye, and elevates or appals the spirit. The crush of

vehicles, the throng of passengers, the meeting together of thousand thousands, without tumult, and without disorder. The million separate purposes, respecting each the other, yet tending to its own individual accomplishment. This it is, that renders London the most wonderful of cities. This it is, that makes all other cities afterwards visited, whatever their wealth, grandeur, or power, appear, in comparison, uninhabited wastes. Night came down, but it brought no cessation in the waves of that living flood. Still it heaved restlessly, resistlessly, inexhaustibly, without ebb, without diminution of volume or of might. Night came down, but not rest. The shadows fell, the vapours settled. The stars strove to look down upon the British Isles. The sceptre of silence and repose was stretched over the creation of the Most High: but the Atlantic hurled its billows upon the British coast, and the headlong current of being rolled, eddying through the British capital. Lights, more in number than the visible stars of the firmament, renewed the dominion of day; and toil usurped the privileges of rest. To a nation that has subdued the elements to vassalage; that orders the fire, the waves, the wind, the thunder, the very light, at pleasure, to slave and toil for its aggrandisement; to such a nation it is a trivial thing to set at nought the demands of Nature: to say to Repose, "thou art a stranger," to Necessity, "thou art my bondsman."

As for myself, I was never weary of contemplating this magnificent display of energy and power. Monuments may be piled to the skies, luxury may lavish the wealth of the Indies in decoration and display; but to him who is accustomed to search below the surface, none of these things so affect the imagination as a consideration of the life-springs of this stupendous capital. We ask ourselves whence it derives such an inexhaustible profusion of being; what vasty deep is the reservoir? We see, along a distance equal to about forty miles, a double row of shops and warehouses,

the contents of the least of which are worth a prince's ransom. We ask, who are the consumers of this amazing store of merchandize. "The universal world," is the reply, and we are satisfied.

We visit the Thames with all its docks, groaning beneath fleets of merchantmen. We know, that England has a hundred harbours, equally stored; and that her vessels in each of the thousand ports of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, exceed in number those of all other foreign states. The consideration overwhelms the mind. "England," said a foreigner to me, "if we calculate only her European subjects, is the most populous of nations. For she can produce more than any other nation in the world. One of her artificers does the work perhaps of fifty of another country, he is therefore worth fifty, in the estimate."

He might have added, that the population of a million, compressed within the limits of a few miles, is equal, for efficiency, to many millions scattered over a wider space.

Into this deep and powerful tide of life, I delighted to cast myself, and float down as a leaf upon some river stream; admiring the while its depth, and strength and fulness. My heart exulted in the power there manifested. I felt, that it was my own, even as I myself formed a particle of it. I looked upon the forms, meeting and passing me. The world can produce none such. At least the old world cannot. In size, in strength, in healthfulness of look, in vigour of motion, and in apparel, I have seen no population to compare with that of London. Summud Khaun was equally struck, and after having visited Russia, Hamburg, France, Italy, and Greece, declared that the English were the Suddozyes (kingly tribe) of Europe, and that London was the lamp (Shum) of cities. I objected to the climate. "The climate," he replied, "what need you know of that? When you go abroad, you just step from one glazed house

into a second, which carries you at speed to a third. You never see nor feel the climate." He was right. In his own country, cloaks innumerable are necessary to the sedentary, as well as to the locomotive. In England, I never found the want of a waistcoat, beneath my military surtout.

I took him with me, in a boat down the Thames, to visit the Tunnel. Ere we descended, I made him observe the clump of merchant vessels, under which the passage runs. We proceeded to the shield, and I explained the process by which this arduous task has been effected, and wrote his name with my own, in the book. I asked him what he thought of the Tunnel. He replied, "It is the very father of Necromancy." I gave him one of the descriptive papers. This, a fair lady's-maid, at one of the hotels in France, attempted to capture; but nothing could persuade him to part with it. "No!" he said, "as it is, with the help of every witness, all I see will be of little use to me. If I tell my countrymen, they will call me a liar; and if I presume to inform my king, he will cut off my head."

It may be supposed, that the bridges of the Thames greatly astonished him. They are indeed noble objects, which never disappoint. But the iron bridge, spanning the river with its three arches, naturally excited his chief admiration; for in his own land, the fusion of iron is unknown, and the price of that metal is very high. But I was amused, when he gravely compared the Hurrie Rood at Heraut, a mountain stream, which can be forded during eight months of the year, to the Thames at London. It is an instance of partiality, by no means singular. I heard the English at Petersburg assert, that the Nieva, where broadest, is not equal to the Thames. A Frenchman at Paris, compared the ditch there to our river; and a Russian prince, whom I met at Calcutta, thought the Hooglie, which is about half a mile, or

2655 feet in breath, less than the Nieva, which averages perhaps, the half of that.

As we drove one night through the street, visiting several curious exhibitions, and he was expressing his astonishment at the mass of buildings, the endless variety of rich merchandise, the crowds of vehicles, and of foot passengers; and the gas lights, which banished night for ever from the city; I bade him remark, that all this was the effect of justice. That in this land, the peasant's cottage is a fortress, which even the king cannot, for any personal object, violate. That property and life being here secure, and the value of good faith known, men are not obliged to bury their wealth in the earth, but bring it forth for display, and for commerce. That men, despised and persecuted in other lands, flock hither, bearing with them their riches and their credit. That the credit of the English throughout the world is so great, that an individual of our merchants was preferred by one of the states of Europe, to a powerful king of Spain; and by entering the money market against him, and taking up all the cash available, arrested the Spanish fleet of invasion, at a moment when we had no sufficient squadron to meet it. "Justice, Summud Khaun, is a good thing. You have seen the effect of its want at Heraut and Khiva; you see here its wonderful power."

"Yes," replied Summud, "Justice is an excellent thing." We were at that moment passing a cab stand. The night was piercingly cold, the wind high, and snow upon the ground. The cab horses, utterly destitute of covering or clothing, stood shivering in the night blast, the picture of misery. It did not escape Summud, who like many of his countrymen is particularly careful of his horse. "Justice," he repeated, "is an excellent thing. Is that a part of it?" pointing to the cab horses.

CHAPTER LI.

Summud Khauniana—Fowl Murders—Summud Khaun's Popularity—Brutal Treatment—Visits the Egyptian Hall—Wax Works—Industrious Fleas—Pastry Cook—His Perfumes—The Stage Coach—In Love—Boiled by mistake—Polytechnic Gallery—St. Pancras Church—Midsummer Night's Dream.

AS Summud Khaun is the first of his race who ever had visited Europe, and as the Afghauns in respect of the comforts and conveniences of civilized life, are almost in a state of nature; I think it may be interesting, to dedicate a chapter to his impressions of England and the English. Summud Khaun's mind, though unacquainted with European arts, was far from being uncultivated. He had a considerable fund of information in matters relating to Central Asia, and had been much about the person of Shauh Kaumraun, of Heraut; had travelled in Persia, and visited Cabul. His memory was stored with quotations from Persian poets, which he aptly introduced in conversation; and he was a shrewd observer, whom nothing escaped. Unfortunately, he had seen but one European country, when he visited London; so that his comparative estimates were formed after his departure, and much interesting remark was lost.

There is no respect in which the Afghaun so strongly betrays his Israelitish descent, as in his inveterate prejudices. Persians and Turks who visit England, fall easily into our habits, enjoy themselves as Europeans, see all that is to be seen, and on their return, wipe out a volume of peccadilloes by a pilgrimage to Mecca or Medina. But Summud Khaun

could not be brought to abate one jot or tittle of his Muhummedan prejudices. His dress alone, was sufficiently remarkable, and prevented him from seeing anything, unprotected by me. Indeed, as he never condescended to learn a word of any European language, he could not, of course, be trusted to walk alone, nor could he even call for any thing he required. He was, therefore, twice as helpless as an infant; for an infant will take the food provided for it; but Summud Khaun had objections to almost every thing I could procure him. By the strictest scrutiny he discovered, that the English do not ordinarily milk their sows; and, therefore, when in a liberal mood would drink milk: and even eat eggs. But, living at first in a farm house, and poking his nose into every corner, it occurred to him to enquire, whether the English killed their fowls in an orthodox manner; and he soon caught a cook-maid strangling the animal (as he called it), that is drawing its neck, previous to cutting its throat. His horror was beyond all expression; because he had for some time confined himself to the flesh of fowls, on the supposition, that pork cannot be disguised to resemble it, and he now perceived that he had eaten the flesh of animals whose soul had escaped the wrong way. He took this much to heart, told a double number of beads, hooked on an extra prayer, and set his teeth firmly against the flesh of fish, fowl, and quadruped. I was, therefore, obliged to ransack the country for fruit, and the pastry-cooks' shops for confectionery and biscuits for him.

The want, however, of flesh meat began, after awhile, to be felt; but I was absent in London, and there was not a creature in the place, to whom he could make himself understood. After exhausting all his eloquence in vain upon the cook and housemaid, he got an egg, and began dropping it from one hand to another, to the great amazement of the poor girls, who thought it might be some hocus pocus of conjuration, and who, after staring for awhile with large

round eyes, took to their heels and summoned the mistress of the house. She for a long time was equally at a loss, to understand, whether he was performing some religious ceremony, or only mad; but at length the truth, ridiculous as it was, broke upon one of the party; a book of natural history was produced, a hen was found, and Summud grinned, and nodded his assent.

Accordingly, a fat fowl was procured him, from a neighbouring farm house. But the cook-maid soon came to say that Mr. Summud Khaun was in a great taking, had rejected the fowl, and was running about, cackling, stamping, and shaking his wings; the cook-maid thought he might want to lay an egg himself. This mystery also, after much investigation, was unravelled; he wanted a live fowl, and a living fowl was procured him. But the astonishment of cook and housemaid was this time mingled with horror. Both came running into the drawing-room, pale and gasping for breath. All that could for some time be got from them was, "O ma'am! Mr. Summud Khaun!"

"Well, what of Mr. Summud Khaun?"

"O ma'am! O ma'am!"

It may be easily supposed, that some alarm was excited, by all this mysterious horror. The idea of Summud hanging suspended to the kitchen rafters, by the garter of the pretty housemaid, of whom he was evidently enamoured, suggested itself; and a variety of horrible surmises succeeded. It proved, however, that the girls were only excessively horrified at the cruelty Summud was perpetrating upon the fowl. He had torn out its tongue, they said; cut its throat, without drawing, in the most unchristianlike manner, and then talked all kinds of strange words to it, in its death agonies, mocking it with sounds that resembled the gabbling of a turkey-cock. On my return from London, I found that Summud Khaun was regarded as an ogre, at the least; horror, disgust, and indignation were coupled with his name. He had dropped

several eggs through his hands since, but without the slightest effect; and I was entreated never to place another live fowl in his power. I called him to me, and begged an explanation, for I knew that he was not naturally cruel. In reply he assured me that he had exercised no cruelty. That he could not think of eating fowls, whose souls were either in their bodies, or had gone to Jehannum, and that we ate none others. He had, therefore, begged a live fowl, and had made it lawful ere he ate it.

But the maids say, you used great cruelty to it, tearing out its tongue, and prolonging unnecessarily its pain, and mocking its agonies."

"Lah! Hôl!" replied poor Summud; "I did only what is prescribed by the Word of God. I turned its head towards Mecca, held its tongue out of its mouth, that the soul might escape comfortably by that road, and uttered the usual Arabic prayer. 'Bismillah oo ruhmān oo ruheem'—In the name of God the compassionate, the merciful."

I, of course, explained all this; but I perceived that nothing could erase the horror excited by the report of the servant maids; and as I was anxious that Summud should be as comfortable as circumstances would allow, I tried to persuade him to change his diet, from fowls to beef or mutton. But the difficulties were numerous. Having seen us strangle our fowls, he was persuaded that we draw the necks of our sheep; as for beef, it is too coarse a food for an Afghaun, he never had eaten, and never would eat it. I assured him that he was quite mistaken. That we killed our sheep by cutting their throats, and I sent him next day with an attendant to the butcher's to see the sheep killed. I felt assured that this would annihilate his scruples. But I was mistaken. The butcher had not only, he said, neglected to turn their heads toward Mecca, but instead of drawing the knife across the throat, had drilled a dirty little hole in the jugular, not half large enough to let the soul

out; and he would be dished, if he ate such meat as that.

I was angry at this obstinacy. Reminded him of his promise to conform, as far as possible, to our usages; a promise that alone prevailed over my reluctance to bring him with me. I represented all the trouble, annoyance, and expence which his perverseness occasioned. It was all of no use. My anger produced tears, but no abatement of his resolution. He replied, "Leave me to myself. I don't want to interrupt your happiness. I will eat bread and drink water. I want no more. I will give up even that to please you; but I cannot peril my soul, even for your sake."

If I pressed him farther, he begged me just to cast him off, and take no further care about him. It was enough for him to see me happy. This rendered anger impossible; and as his health was suffering from the unnatural diet to which he was subjected, I thought the only way was to purchase him a live sheep whenever he required meat. I accordingly sent him to the butcher's where he selected the fattest, and he returned home with it delighted, took it into the public road before the house in which he lodged, and cut its throat there in the direction of Mecca, making it as holy as he possibly could with a double prayer. Imagine the horror of the good people of the neighbourhood, who will eat as many sheep as you please; but think any man but the butcher a cannibal, who shall presume to kill one. The scandal was very great. The murder of the fowl was a private transaction; but this was done in the very teeth of the public. I was now at my wit's end; and I know not how I should have supplied his wants, had not the butcher volunteered to let him kill a sheep in the shambles when he needed meat, and take any portion of it that he might require. This arrangement answered very well in the country; he killed his sheep, and carried half of it home, whenever it suited him: but in London, I could effect no such arrangement for

him; for, although his board was paid for, he would touch nothing set before him, and I was obliged to forage amongst the fruiterers' and pastry cooks' shops, for fruits, jams, pastry, and raspberry vinegar; the latter being his favourite tipple.

In order that he might ingratiate himself with those about him, I kept his unfathomable pockets well supplied with confectionery. He was, in consequence, very popular with all the children of the country town, who followed him in flocks whenever he went abroad, and were, indeed his only companions. One of the children of the person with whom, eventually, I lodged him, agreed in age with his youngest boy, left at Heraut, and became a great pet. Indeed, the poor boy's health was ruined by the quantity of sweetmeats he received from Summud Khaun. The good people of the house had a great regard for him; and in spite of the murder of fowl and sheep, parties were made to visit him; and with the true delicacy of the English, that the visit might not be taken as addressed to a monster, fruits and preserves were brought as little offerings to a guest.

Previous to this, however, and on his first arrival at Alton, an unfortunate occurrence happened, which gave me infinite concern. I was absent in London, and the family were at Church. A trooper of dragoons, and a labourer, both rather drunk, came prowling about the premises to get a view of the Turk, as they called him. Summud was seated in the garden under an apple tree, thinking himself quite secure on British ground, and in the house of his master. The men approached the low hedge, and after for some time staring at him, began to throw stones and to abuse him; at length, the trooper dared the labourer to pull the Turk's beard. The labourer leapt over the hedge, seized poor Summud's beard, and gave it several tugs; an insult, that is to be washed out only with blood. Summud ran in for his sabre, and returning, chased the labourer through the road, and

would probably have killed could he have caught him: but the fellow, in an agony of terror, was more than a match in the race for Summud, encumbered as was the latter with cloaks and huge unmentionables, so that the poor Afghaun returned to the house almost broken-hearted, insulted and dishonored, under the very roof of his master. I could not, of course, overlook such a disgraceful outrage; an act of brutality which we had not witnessed amongst Toorks, Kuzzauks, or Tartars. I lodged a complaint with the Magistrate: the offender was apprehended, tried, and sentenced to two months' imprisonment. When Summud, who was in court during the proceedings, learned the sentence, he interceded for the man, assuring the Magistrate that he quite forgave him. But the Magistrate very properly replied, that the act was one in which the character of the nation was at stake; and that he could not remove the penalty.

This circumstance greatly distressed me. I found, that in spite of our boasted civility, the stranger in England is liable to acts of brutality, which would not be credited in barbarous countries. I was mortified and humiliated beyond measure; I was no longer easy in leaving the house for a few days, and obliged to agree with the man with whom he lodged, that Summud should never show himself abroad unattended by one of the family. Even this precaution was ineffectual to prevent much uneasiness to my family, for the people of the neighbourhood collected in crowds around the house and grounds to gaze upon him; and it was impossible to feel assured that some drunken fellow amongst them might not repeat the outrage. Summud Khaun was the only Afghaun that had ever visited Europe; and it was miserable to think that such an impression of our barbarity and inhospitality should be made upon a nation by his report.

Every evening at sunset, Summud Khaun was to be seen upon the green turf of the grass plot in front

of the house, bowing and kneeling, and prostrating himself in the direction of Mecca, by assistance of a compass, which I had purchased for him. Dressed in my green furred cloak, which had reverted to him, with his long beard and turbaned brow, he was the most picturesque of figures, and one that had surely not often been seen in that quiet country place. He himself enjoyed his importance in spite of its inconvenience, and when his audience was numerous, his prayers and genuflections were endless. "But," said he one day, "it is desperately dull work; I cannot speak a word of the language of your country. And as for venturing to walk abroad, I am an owl, Sir, a very owl; every sparrow in the neigbourhood follows me, and gabbles at me, and I am glad enough to get back to my corner of obscurity."

This boorish propensity of the English utterly prevented all freedom to the luckless guest. In London it was not quite so bad; but his ignorance of the language made it necessary that he should never move without my protection; and his helplessness prevented me from assigning him the place of a servant in the vehicle. I drove him to the Egyptian Hall, where, however, we were disappointed of the principal exhibition. I took him to see the wax works, a sight really worthy of attention. He was much struck, and particularly with the figure of Mary, Queen of Scots, which he pointed out to me. The master of the exhibition came up, and after apologizing, begged to enquire of me the dress usually worn by Mehemet Ali; perhaps, he said, that Turkish gentleman might know. He was about to exhibit a waxen figure of the King of Egypt; but did not inform me how he had procured the features without the dress. I accompanied Summud to visit the industrious fleas. The exhibition is a miserable failure. The idea of making fleas work, however, greatly amused him.

"I saw," he said, "on first arriving, a dog harnessed in a cart. I afterwards saw two goats thus disposed

of. I thought this very wonderful; but never conjectured that you made use of fleas as draught cattle. What will Shauh Kaumraun say to this, if I venture to repeat it?"

On returning from any of these expeditions, I invariably led him to the pastry-cook's; a place of resort sufficiently astonishing to the inhabitants of any half-civilised land. The cleanliness, elegance, and comfort of the arrangements, struck him; and the beauty of some of the young women who attended, made him fancy himself in the land of Peris. The confectionary also, he acknowledged to be passing good; and when he had seen several other countries of Europe, he confessed that, barring our monstrous habit of eating *raw* butter upon our bread, our filthy addiction to the flesh of the unclean One, our coarse delight in beef, and horrible preference of flesh from which the soul had never satisfactorily departed; we were, next to himself, the cleanest feeders in the world.

Once, when I was about to quit London for a few days, I purposed leaving Summud Khaun at Hyde Park Hotel (where I had been staying), until my return; and fancied that the master of the hotel was satisfied with the arrangement. When, however, just leaving the house, the waiter came to say that he feared they could not take charge of him. That the servants of other gentlemen at the hotel objected to eat or even sit with him. Now, as Summud was the most polite and hospitable of persons, I confess I was angry at the objection, and insisted upon knowing the reason. "Why, Sir," said the waiter, "he sits upon the ground, Sir, and eats with his fingers."

"Well, and what does that signify. He has his own separate dish, so that he cannot offend their prejudices."

"Yes, Sir; but then he carries a number of funny smells about with him, Sir, and that 's the truth; and Mrs. ——'s lady's maid, declares she can't stand it,

by no means, Sir! And Mr. ——'s gentleman swears that it 's unjustifiably bad, Sir."

I had taken places for myself and a friend in the coach, and at the last moment was obliged to pack Summud Khaun and his baggage into a cab, with instructions to follow in our wake to the White Horse Cellar, and in constant anxiety all the while, lest anything should go wrong with him, as he could not speak a word of English. Fortunately, a place was procurable for him outside, and he sat with me, admiring greatly all he saw. The beauty of the country, the excellence of the roads, the perfection of all the arrangements for expediting progress; but above all things, that every person, whatever his condition, seemed to be able to read and write. They were all Meerzas.* This, he said, was the most wonderful and beneficial of all our advantages, and one of the secrets of our power and wealth. When he reached the house where he had been boarded, the good woman rushed out, seized him by the hand, and drew him in, exclaiming, "O Mr. Summud Khaun, I be so glad to see you." Indeed, wherever he went he became a favourite; and when he had got rid of those funny smells which he carried about with him, even the people of the London hotel parted from him with regret. He contrived to give his host and hostess in the country an exalted notion of his consequence. I believe, that to this day, they fancy he is some great person, who has saved my life in foreign lands.

One of my greatest difficulties in England was to procure him dye for his beard. I tried an infinite variety of mixtures, all warranted infallible; but although he exhausted a bottle at a sitting, and cost me monthly several guineas in dyes, he never could get beyond a mahogany colour. He complained bitterly of this, for he was in love, as we have seen, with the housemaid; but I really could not help him. Henna and wild indigo were not to be procured.

* i. e., Secretaries or Scribes.

His love was the cause of much embarrassment in our quiet household. The housemaid was a very pretty girl, but a great goose; and Summud's advances frightened her out of her wits. One day, he had drawn a carving knife, which, since the assault recorded, he always wore dagger-fashion in his girdle; and I suppose would have threatened to stab himself. But the mere sight of the knife quite upset the kitchen. The two girls ran screaming to report to their mistress that Mr. Summud Khaun had drawn his dagger upon them; and, added the housemaid, "I'm sure, ma'am, he's after something dangerous, for he grins at me quite spiteful, ma'am, and one day cut off a bit of my hair, ma'am. And I don't know what he's going to do with it, ma'am. And he takes out the saucepan into the garden, ma'am; and Mary and me's obliged to chase him, ma'am, to get it back, ma'am; and I'm sure, ma'am, I don't like Mr. Summud's doings, ma'am, at all."

In short, the misunderstandings increased to such a degree, that I thought it better that he should not spend the day in the house as heretofore. When next I took him to London, I carried him one night to a vapour bath near St. James's-street, expecting, from the Muhummedan name of the owner, to find there some one of his own persuasion, who could talk Persian to him. But the owner, a Moosulmaun from India, was absent, and not a creature in the house could understand him. I therefore acted as interpreter, and having arranged everything, left him, and sauntered for an hour through the streets, which were half a foot deep in melting snow. I had paid half a guinea for his treat, and hoped he would be pleased. When, however, I met him, I found him in perfect misery, venting his indignation in Persian and Pooshtoo, alternately, with an occasional mixture of an Arabic, Toorkish, or English word. The poor people of the house were more astonished than edified. As soon as he could make himself intelligible to me,

I found that he had been made to sit upon a cane-bottomed chair; that a curtain was drawn around him, and that at a signal, a large volume of boiling steam rushed up between his legs like an eruption of Etna, frightening him within an inch of his life, wofully scalding his sitting apparatus, and speedily increasing to a degree that almost stifled him. In vain he called out to have the curtains opened. The attendant only drew it the closer, being persuaded that a black man liked it hot. He roared, he bellowed; but this only raised fresh demands for atmospheric air, which was not to be come by. At length, undressed as he was, he bolted through the curtain, upsetting the attendant, and frightening him not a little, declaring, in excellent Pooshtoo, that he had never asked to be boiled, and then vainly endeavouring to persuade the man to scrub him, to dye his beard, and to polish the soles of his feet with pumice stone. In short, it was a complete failure, like every other attempt I had made for his comfort. He had taken it into his head that the English are all yellow-haired, and that all dark hair in the country has received its tint from dye; and he thought it very hard that he could procure no effectual preparation for his beard.

At the polytechnic exhibition he saw many marvels. The looms were perhaps those which most interested him, because he could best understand them. The new process for raising water by means of an endless tape, astonished me as much as it surprised him. When he saw me about to enter the diving-bell, he entreated me not to be so rash; and when I invited him to accompany me, declared he thought he should be more usefully employed in praying for me on dry land. The pride of saying he was the only Afghaun who had ever descended in a diving-bell, could not prevail over his extreme caution.

Having discovered a handsome church (St. Pancras), free from images, I took him, at his desire, to

see our worship. The organ, which he now heard for the first time in his life, astonished him; but I fear he must have formed a mean opinion of our devotion; for many faces were counter-marched to stare at him. The clergyman met us after service, when I was translating to Summud the Decalogue, and exhibiting the building, and offered us attention. I had warned him that he need not follow the motions of the congregation, but might sit still if he pleased; he replied, "It is the temple of God, and I will comply." He was struck with the charity children, and I informed him that the object of religion with us, was to cultivate every virtue, and that the sermon he had just heard, was an exhortation to charity, mercy and justice.

But the exhibition that gave him the most intense delight, was Covent Garden Theatre. I took him there twice to see the Midsummer Night's Dream, a piece got up in a style of splendour never perhaps equalled. The theatre itself, with all its galleries, its beautiful faces, and brilliant lights, was a sufficient marvel; but, when the performance commenced, the enchantment was complete: the scenery so exquisitely delineated; the figures, beautiful in themselves, and apparelled as only Peris appear; the beautiful singing; the dancing, from which I myself could not, for an instant, withdraw the eye; the winged things floating in the air, or rising through the earth, all bewildered and delighted him; and he still declares, that of all the wonderful and delightful things possessed by the English, their Play of Fairies is the most marvellous. I was astonished to perceive in him so just an appreciation of the several vocal performances. He distinguished the Fairy King amongst these, a part taken by Vestris; and Miss Rainsford, who acted the part of another fairy, also attracted his notice. I explained to him the story, as the play proceeded. The machinery of fairies we have ourselves borrowed from Asia; and it was easily

comprehended by him. When Puck springs into the air, and flies across the stage, he was at first startled, and bewildered; but he soon recovered, and remarked, "You do that by means of wires." Bully Bottom's metamorphosis he readily comprehended. The sagacious looks of the ass, and the motions of its ear, when the Fairy Queen is whispering her love secrets, were all duly appreciated. The piece closes by the sudden apparition of fairies on earth, and fluttering in mid air, bearing each a torch in her hand. In short, fairy-land itself is outdone; and I will venture to say, that Summud's most exaggerated notion of the glories of Peristaun, never came up to this elegant exhibition. When I explained to him, that the house, the scenery, and decorations were all the property, not of the king, but of private individuals, his astonishment was extreme. Unfortunately, Astley's Theatre was closed, so that he lost that exhibition entirely, and I was too much a stranger in London to do its lions justice.

In spite of the disgraceful outrage above recorded, Summud Khaun did not quit England until he had learned to love the nation; and I perceived, that every step we took in Europe confirmed his opinion of the superior worth and kindness of the English; and I must, as a stranger and a traveller, add my testimony, that in spite of occasional acts of boorishness and brutality, that would shame savages, I have met no people so generally courteous, kind-hearted, and estimable, as my own countrymen.

CHAPTER LII.

London and St. Petersburg contrasted—English Women—Children—Erle Stoke Park.

I FOUND, on examining St. Petersburg feature by feature, but very few objects of admiration. London was not built, like the Russian capital, for effect. There are but one or two points of view from which a stranger can form a notion of the grandeur and beauty of the British metropolis. The private dwellings are as irregular in height, shape, and disposition as the several minds that have begotten them, each according to his several fancy, and without the terrors of an Imperial rod. The lavish profusion of wealth, power, material, has been squandered by the perverseness of differing wills, and it is only within the last twenty years, that any attempt has been made to arrange, into something like harmony, the chaos of great and little elements, confusedly crushed together. Where this attempt has been made effective, where order has been let into the stronghold of confusion, and a gleam of sunshine has been poured through the gloom of ages, it has opened a perspective quite worthy of the metropolis of a mighty nation, and has lighted up features which are unmatched in the world. What capital, for instance, can boast of such a scene as accompanies the visitor from Westminster bridge to the end of Gloucester terrace, in Regent's Park; a space of four miles of wide street, lined with beautiful buildings. What capital can exhibit the effect of St. James's Park, with the glorious old Abbey on one side, bosomed in

trees, and the princely mass of Carlton terrace towering on the other, to the skies. But much remains yet to be done in the older parts of London, ere justice can be rendered to the monuments buried therein.

London is richer in fine monuments than any city in the world. Her six bridges are a host in themselves. St. Paul's and the Abbey are Cathedrals, the first without a rival, the second not often surpassed. Her three hundred churches are decided embellishments, although few of them rise into any sublimity of proportion or effect. Her palaces and public buildings are numerous; sometimes noble, often elegant. The eye is oftener charmed than offended with her architecture; for there is no straining for effect, no overloading with tawdry ornament, as in Russia and in France. The severe rules of Greece have not always been attended to, but the deviation is often happy, and rarely amounts to outrage. The portico of the London University is the most exquisite thing of its kind that I have seen, and the spire of Langham church is a model of elegance. Of the three hundred churches and chapels that remain, there are several extremely beautiful. The greater number are handsome, and the proportion of ugly buildings is smaller perhaps than in any other city in the world. But the effect produced by this mass of fine architecture is nothing. The portico of the India House may be passed daily for a dozen years without the discovery of its existence. St. Paul's, the largest cathedral (with one exception) in the world, is invisible. St. James' Palace is hidden behind a filthy heap of rubbish, intended as a gateway. The Bank of England is buried. The Mint is lost. The Mansion House is strangled. Three-fourths of the beautiful churches are known by name only beyond their immediate congregations. And, unfortunately, the value of ground in London is so enormous, that there appears little hope of these fine monuments being ever disinterred.

The contrast, therefore, between London and St. Petersburg is the greatest that can possibly be imagined. This is all effect. That is all *but* effect. This, with many fine but few beautiful elements, may boast to be the handsomest capital in the world. That, with an endless profusion of unrivalled monuments, with architecture that would make the fame of three ordinary capitals, can pretend only to the distinction of being the grandest and most wonderful. But this is not all; for the sunny sky and lucid atmosphere of St. Petersburg are in strong contrast with the thick, yellow, oily fluid of London, where, whenever it does not rain water, it hails thick showers of soot. The river Nieva, rolling its volume of crystal under the palaces and monuments of St. Petersburg, is strangely contrasted with the filthy stream of the Thames, and all its ragged array of huts and kennels; and whilst the Nieva possesses only a bridge of boats across its magnificent tide, the Thames is spanned by a variety of bridges, each a masterpiece if compared with anything else of the kind. One, in short, is the capital of a despotic monarchy; the other, the metropolis of a free and mercantile state. The one has improved to the utmost great natural advantages. The other has struggled with vast natural difficulties; has put forth powers never yet equalled in the history of a capital: but for want of design has made, at best, a splendid failure. The view from London-bridge makes us forget all the glory of St. Petersburg, and our Abbey and Cathedral cast all her array of monuments into shade; neither can she, in the whole extent of her light airy streets, shew anything comparable to the tract between Westminster-bridge and Regent's-park, any more than her grand and beautiful river can display the forest of masts which spring from the dingy bosom of the Thames. Her public parks and gardens are inferior to ours; but on leaving her walls, on one side we enter the wild forest, and on the other we traverse lovely islands, where

Nature is barely subdued, and not mutilated and fettered as in the precincts of our own capital. We go to London to stare and wonder. We visit St. Petersburg to enjoy her pure atmosphere, and to gaze everywhere upon a handsome picture, never rising beyond beauty, never sinking below mediocrity. At St. Petersburg, we tire after a while of the sameness of the subject. We desire a few contrasts, more life, some pretence for curiosity. London is a world in itself. The stranger is the person least struck by it, because he can least conjecture all the wondrous objects of art, but much more of metaphysical interest, which are contained within its endless ramification of streets and alleys, where may be found peoples and petty nations distinct from one another in character, education, and physiognomy. In St. Petersburg, all have the character prescribed by the imperial ukase. All are equally slaves; and, if possessed of minds, in happy ignorance of the misfortune. But, in London, the meanest is sensible of his right to think and act for himself; and as the difficulty of subsistence in an over-peopled land produces extremes of ignorance as deplorable as anything known to savages, so this liberty of thought and action leads alternately to the brightest virtues and the most horrible of crimes; to the most exquisite polish of mind and manner; to grace of thought, of motion, of expression, known no where else on earth; and to coarseness, vulgarity, and brutality, scarcely credible to any other nation. And thus, the man who has never left the pavement of London, may have studied the human mind under almost every possible phase; from that of the savage whose knowledge is the mere cunning necessary to animal existence, to that of the most polished of wits, and the most enlightened of philosophers.

Farther than this we will not attempt to draw the contrast, for the treasures of science, of research, of amusement possessed by London, have nothing to

serve as their foil in the Russian capital, if we except the frank hospitality, the accessibility, and love of gaiety which characterise the kind inhabitants—possessions more estimable, because less adventitious.

In one of the brief intervals of relaxation allowed me during my stay in England, I ran down to visit the haunts of my childhood, and the place of my birth. Twenty years had passed over the spot, and many alterations had taken place. But the general features remained as before. *They* remained as before—but the eye which beheld, and the mind which considered them, how strangely were they changed. I walked as a somnambulist. All I saw around me appeared shadows of my own fancy, one of those vivid dreams which had so often transported me fifteen thousand miles in an instant to this very spot, to the presence of these objects, to the thoughts and memories which they now awakened.

The features, I have said, remained as before; but my eye had become an inverted telescope, everything was dwindled to Lilliputian dimensions. The towering walls, which had been my models when reading of Babylon and Nineveh, had suddenly sunk to the most miserable dimensions. The mansions I had regarded as palaces in former days, appeared in the contrast but cages fit for sparrows.

The trees, behind which the sun of my childhood had set, where the heaven descended to such visible contact with the earth that I scorned the superstition which removed it to an immeasurable distance, these I now beheld no longer as giants, but as dwarfs; and, warned by past experience, hired here a chaise to convey me to the spot from whence my philosophical observations had been made. I had rated the distance in miles, and had bargained accordingly: it proved to be a few hundred yards, and the coachman set me down as a greenhorn.

I passed the sepulchral mound, shaded with pine trees, where sleep the warriors of other days. It had

seen unmoved the passage of centuries, and of course was not altered by the years of my remembrance. I passed also the bounds which once it was high treason to transgress. That play-ground with all its heroes: the strong, the fleet, the agile, the tough. It seemed to me peopled once more with candidates for fame in the mysteries of bat, hoop, football, and marbles. Where were they all dispersed whilst I had been playing a bout of long bowls in Eastern lands? One I had met perched, cock-a-hoop, in a pulpit. A second was keeping the wicket at No. 1, Chowringhee.* A third was at blindman's-buff, as a doctor. A fourth at duck, as a middy. A fifth at bawl, as an auctioneer. A sixth was playing the royal game of goose, as a poet. A seventh, follow my leader, as a juryman. An eighth had had his head broken in a game of conquerors; and a ninth was at that moment uppermost in a game of "high cock-a-lorum jig" with the nation, as a member of Parliament.

And the glorious gingerbread shop, and the glorious fat-faced Mrs. Abraham, who presided over it, issuing her parliamentary edicts, and rejoicing our young hearts, as she emptied our young pockets. She could not be mortal; she had a look of enduring beneficence, that was not made for decay. She was one of the Olympics of the past. She had settled herself upon this earth of ours, so cosily, so broadly, so comfortably; she had enlarged her foundation like some mighty pyramid. It seemed impossible that time or the elements should shake her, whilst cocoanuts should continue to be given to mortals, and damsons and bullaces be rained below. I sought out her throne. I was astonished at the bareness of the deep window, formerly lined with bull's-eyes, lollipops, and sugar-plums. I entered; I missed that most fragrant of fragrances, which formerly issued from this stronghold of delight, addressing itself equally to the brain, the fancy, and the stomach, promising such bliss as

* The Debtors' Gaol.

only the school-boy can enjoy, whose appetite, sharpened by the birch, is appeased upon cheese-cakes and strawberries. A sickness of the heart came over me; but I persisted. I penetrated the well-known precincts. I looked for the ample form of the Queen of Queen-cakes. Could that indeed be she, dwindled, like her empire, to the dimensions of a shrivelled walnut-kernel, even as her shop was dwindled to its shell? She who had filled her shell to o'erflowing, even when that shell was a palace of fat things. I stood thunderstruck, staring at the anatomy before me. She saw that I was of the ghost tribe, who will not speak until spoken to; and, with a curtsey, asked my will. This completely awakened me. Mrs. Abraham would as soon have thought of waltzing, as of curtseying; indeed, the motion to a lady of her dimensions had been final, unless she had had a sixty-horse power in the knee-pan. Imagine the curtsey of the great Egyptian pyramid. The result of my enquiry was, that Mrs. Abraham, the immortal Queen of Lollipops, was—dead. Her niece had attempted to keep up the shop, but, for want of the substance of the old lady, it had dwindled away; so that now I could scarcely procure a pear and a sheet of parliament, to remind me of my immortal entry into pinafores.

I pursued my ramble, greatly shocked and dispirited. The death of a hundred new acquaintance does not so painfully remind us of our mortality as the disappearance of one of these landmarks of our history, these rallying points of our memory, who had long ceased to be regarded as actors in the pageant of existence, and had become, as it were, parts of the machinery of the stage. I pursued my course toward the house that had shielded me in infancy. The plot of grass in front was all the worse for age, which had shrivelled its dimensions. I stepped over the chains, under which I used to creep. I was at the gate of my father's house, a stranger, and disowned. The heavy horse-chesnut trees gloomed over me. But

where was their giant size? I remember when it was a feat to shy a pebble over them; and now I dare not declare how miserable they appeared to an eye accustomed to the mountainous masses of foliage of tropical climes. But I stood upon haunted and sacred ground. My hand trembled as I opened the gate; my knees gave way as I surmounted the step, and stood at my father's door. There I paused, to recover my scattered thoughts; to persuade myself by internal evidence that I was not in a trance; to indulge awhile in comparison of the scene as I had left it with the scene as it stood before me and around.

Not a tree, not a plant, or a shrub had grown in that area, but its image was fresh in my remembrance. One by one I summoned them before me; many came, sufficient to identify the spot; but many, how many, like the hands that planted and the eyes that watched them, were no more! Of those which remained, time had dimmed the beauty, even as experience had curbed the dimensions. The white blossomed acacia, the pride of that plot of turf, beneath which we so often made our summer seat, whose yellow leaves, as they fell around us, we collected, to assist in our sports, and whose image had become a type of my early joys, it was still there; but a change had passed over it; its luxuriant foliage had been lopped by decay; its trunk was shattered and minished, and an ivy presumed to wind its arms around it, and to mingle its dank, night-haunted leaves and fibres with the tresses of this daughter of the sun. That sun now cast its garish beams upon the lawn, over which the acacia had once spread her fairy arms, as a mediator between her lord and the spot of her love. The sun-beams that spread through her golden foliage and snowy blossoms, how sweetly, how lightly, how playfully had they fallen, robbed of all their fire, their glare transmuted into glory!

But all this was nothing to the silence of that court where forms had flitted incessantly past, and the light-

hearted mirth of children had rung, until the walls were alive with the echo. Now, although there was no other symptom of desertion, which, indeed, had harmonised far better with my emotions, yet there was no life. It seemed as if all this ruin had been brought about in a day; that the hearts of the loved ones had grown suddenly still, and a blight had fallen upon the trees and shrubs, leaving the mansion unaltered in its freshness, although humbled in the pride of its dimensions. It was long ere I could summon courage to burst this chain of lucubrations, and make my presence known. Indeed, but for the fear of becoming an object of suspicion, I should have lingered much longer.

The summons was answered slowly and reluctantly. The present owner was an invalid, and just about to sit down to dinner. I therefore could not persist; but left my card, saying I would do myself the honour to call on some future day. It was now autumn, and ere I could find another opportunity, winter had desolated the country. I could not bear to see that little paradise in its misery, so left England without revisiting it.

The whole of that day I consumed in tracking the footprints of other years. It was a most melancholy, thrilling, fascinating employ. The greater part of the emotions too sacred to be recorded, too deep to be even shadowed by words. Changes had taken place, which aroused my indignation; parts of my fathers' ground had been sold to speculators in brick and mortar; and the solitary lane, where it was not safe to walk after nightfall, had become a street of rather pretty villas: they had no business, however, there. I vainly sought the paling, which had been broken by the charge of a bull upon my red jacket: a college stood upon the spot. One circumstance perplexed me. It was, that I found the objects formerly regarded with admiration, had been minute particles of that which now appeared so beautiful as a whole;

they were little circles, suited to the insect eyes that surveyed them, and now scarcely visible as subjects of separate review.

The eye, so long accustomed to the wide, boundless steppe, to the aspect of mountains losing their summits in the clouds, required now the aid of the microscope to discern the Lilliputian landscape which once had been in itself a world.

CHAPTER LIII.

Prize Charity Children—Church Music—Passion for Monsters—Transition from India to England—Impressions—Indian Society—English Circle.

ON reaching England after so long an absence, I was much in the condition of a foreigner, and was struck with several remnants of barbarity, to which I suppose habit has reconciled us. I was anxious to join in divine service at St. Paul's Cathedral; but, mistaking the hour, met the congregation streaming out as I was about to enter. I therefore turned back, and retraced my steps towards the Strand, making for the first church on the way. Service, however, had commenced about a quarter of an hour, and the doors were fast closed in my teeth. I tried at another and another, but with no better success. The fourth admitted me. I confess I thought this inhospitality, unchristian and inhuman. A species of tyranny exercised by him who receives the wages of a shepherd, precisely similar to that of the shepherd who would shut out the last of his sheep from the fold at night, when wolves are abroad. That any nation should submit to such an outrage seemed astonishing.

And who are the late comers? Amongst them will be found the weak, the infirm, the aged, the stranger. Are these the persons whom a minister of the gospel would exclude? O England, who sendest forth thy missionaries with the message of love to distant nations, recall that sacred band, and send them

amongst the pastors of thy church at home, to preach to some of them humility and benevolence.

At another chapel, in Quebec-street, I found a board inviting thirsty souls into the vault. To what purpose do you imagine? To buy gin and brandy. Ho! Ho! I said, they keep their bodies above ground, and their spirits down below. This is a new contrivance, a patent, I suppose, a little hop in the march of intellect. I entered amongst the bodies. The difficulty before had been the lateness of my arrival: but I found that it was still more heathenish to be too early; for the big wigs had not assumed their purchased seats at the banquet; and the female usher bade me wait in the hope of their leavings. I assured the good lady that she was quite mistaken in supposing me a dog, and prepared to quit the church; she did not like to lose a customer, and found me a seat forthwith.

When the congregation was assembled, I looked up, and saw ranged aloft, and full in front of the assembly, twelve charity children, six on each side. It was evident that the fattest had been chosen as specimens; and their position in the most conspicuous part of the temple of humility, in the very focus of all the eyes present, like fat ducks in a poulterer's stall, was a happy commentary on the text, "Do not your alms before men, to be seen of them." It also served the purpose wonderfully well of breaking down all that false pride which is so apt to cling to her who eats the bread of charity. Each fat girl had been taught to shade, during prayer, with a white handkerchief, all of her fat face, excepting the corner of one eye. This served the double purpose of proving her devotion, and that she possessed at least *one* lily-white pocket-handkerchief. I have seen hypocrisy and ostentation in many forms, but never in one so revolting as this. I fancy there is a kind of emulation between neighbouring parishes which shall shew the fatter specimen of charity. The good congregation meanwhile have their full pennyworth. They look

up, and behold staring them in the face a record of those good deeds which the legislature has screwed out of them. Six days in the week they swear at the poor's laws, and on the seventh, they find they are the most charitable of the human race Can they doubt it? with such sleek, substantial proofs before their eyes, whenever those eyes are lifted to heaven. Surely all this needs amendment. I would not hide the charity children, but neither would I hang them up like fat joints in a butcher's shop, as specimens of the goodness of the congregation. The pride that shrinks from eating the bread of idleness, may be very horrible in some rigid eyes, nevertheless I would encourage and foster it, as one of the most Christian of virtues; and the bashfulness which shrinks from the gaze of the multitude, I would esteem in a woman rather graceful than heinous.

The music which I heard in some of our churches, far surpasses anything I ever witnessed on the continent. I do not mean the vocal, so much as the instrumental. But, indeed, a fine organ, delicately touched, is scarcely an instrument, it is a voice. Too generally, noise is preferred to music; but there are some eminent exceptions, and they are not always found where expected. In country churches, little better than barns in appearance, I have sometimes met with an organ that played upon the heart. In those congregations in which the strange idea exists that the Almighty receives any glory from sounds that resemble the howling of lost spirits, music, of course, is out of the question; but when this noble auxiliary to devotion is used as such, and the frame of mind produced by it is regarded as the offering, the effect is often most sublime. "Would you then have hired singers?"—"Have we hired clergymen? The man who is paid for directing that part of Divine worship may be as holy a servant of the temple as he who reads the prayers."

"But we are commanded to sing psalms when merry."

"To sing—not to howl!"

"But the congregation cannot join, if only those sing who have voices."

"A man is accepted according to his havings, not his deficiencies. It is not the value of the gift, but the frame of the heart which finds favour. It is not the sound, but the effect of that sound in elevating the mind, that is healthful. God is not honoured by any praise man can render him; but he is honoured when man is improved by having rendered it. We can glorify him, only as we perfect his gift, his workmanship, the soul. He is blessed as we are blessed. It is his essential perfection, who is above the reach of benefit, to derive satisfaction from the happiness of his creation. To render praise as a debt, as that which can profit or in itself please the Majesty of Heaven, is to betray a deplorable and grovelling ignorance of the Divine attributes.

In taking Summud Khaun to the wax-work exhibition, he observed a little insignificant figure standing in a corner, pistol in hand, and was naturally anxious to know what hero was before him—whether a king, a conqueror, a poet, or a philosopher. I tried to attract his attention elsewhere, but it would not do; and as it has been my system to inform him always truly and sincerely upon every point of his curiosity, I now explained, with some hesitation, that this was the figure of a man, infamous for his attempt to distract his country by murdering his young and innocent Queen. The name I would not tell him, nor shall this paper be defiled by it. When he expressed wonder, that the hand of the Most High should have created anything so deformed, I explained that the act was that of a little mind, inflamed by insanity; that no Englishman in his senses could survive the disgrace of having lifted his hand against a woman, nor any man commit so heinous a crime against his country and society, without a brand of infamy the deepest and most indelible.

"But," objected Summud, "what have these people round him done, that they should be polluted by his presence. I understood you to say, that they were the figures of persons eminent for virtue, for station, or for talents. Is this their reward, to be shewn about in company with one who at best was a common madman, and known to mankind only as a murderer."

I hung my head in presence of the untutored Afghaun. "To tell you the truth, Summud Khaun, the English are themselves mad upon one point. They have a rage for monsters, which they indulge at the expense of many of the most graceful and sacred considerations. Thus, instead of issuing an edict, that the name of this assassin should be for ever disused in the land, to mark our abhorrence of an act the most despicable, inspired by a condition the most lamentable and humiliating, we suffer our showmen to set up the effigy of the assassin, in company with those of our kings and our heroes; and we flock from all parts to encourage the outrage; thus deliberately offering a premium for crime.

The day following, I was exhibiting to Summud the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park. The giraffes occupy a building in which is also confined a small ourang-outang, the most beastly and disgusting object I have ever seen. Summud was naturally much struck with the giraffes, which are unknown, even by report, to natives of Asia. The elegance of their figure, the loftiness of their crests, the lustre of their large eyes (the most beautiful in the world), the gentleness of their nature, all impressed him, as well as myself, with an admiration approaching to fascination. Whilst we stood gazing in delight upon these glorious creatures, and whilst they drooped down their beautiful heads to mine to be fondled, several ladies entered, two of them beautiful and graceful young creatures. They rewarded the giraffes with a passing glance, and instantly flew, delighted, to the brutal object at the

farther side of the room. There they remained untired, for more than half an hour, gazing at a monster which I could not look upon without loathing, feeding it with sweetmeats, and caressing it with their lily hands, in spite of its gluttonous and disgusting habits, and painful resemblance to the human form.

Summud Khaun did not fail to perceive this. It was a painful commentary upon my observation of the preceding day. If this monster had assassinated a woman and a queen, he could scarcely have been more interesting to the fair of the British Isles.

The sudden transition from a state of violent excitement to one of entire rest is always borne with impatience; and it is, perhaps, impossible for a mind so circumstanced to judge impartially of the phenomena of its new position. I felt, during the whole of my continuance in England, like a soldier off his post, within hearing of hostile shot. I was in a constant state of hurry, as if the next instant must summon me to action, or brand me with the charge of backwardness. But, independent of this, the sphere we fall into in England, on returning from the East, is so dwindled, the scope for our energies so small, we are so hemmed around with petty cares, and walled in by petty people and petty prejudices, that we feel like men groping in the bowels of the earth; we may be strangled by the close air; we may break the head or the shin against the roof or pavement of our prison; we may do there the labours of a Hercules in hewing and delving; but the eyes of our fellow-creatures are not upon the work, the light of heaven shines not upon our exertions, the soul retreats back upon itself with a feeling of despair; all is so cut and squared, and contracted into insignificance. It is in vain that we look upon those natural adornments, which heaven has so richly lavished upon our land; it is in vain that we find beating around us the warmest and truest hearts, directed by the purest and least earthly minds; it is in vain that the exquisite finish of all the arrange-

ments of an English home call forth our hourly admiration. That we pause in our ramble, to bless each several face we meet as the face of a countryman—that we live over and over again the sacred memories of days past, never to return. We feel that we were not made to slumber in a cage, though its bars should be golden, and though a syren or an angel sing the dirge of our repose.

The circle which we form around us in the Upper Provinces of India, can seldom boast of members remarkable for intellectual culture or refinement. They are generally persons who have been early cast upon the sea of strife, and severed from opportunities of consulting the works of the dead, or the more instructed of their contemporaries. Intercourse with such may not tend much to our mental advancement. They may want the accomplishments of those who have lived longer in a more civilised land; but they are men whose powers and resources have been early put in requisition, and that ere the mind had been fettered and cramped by the iron band of prejudice. This gives them each a peculiar and strongly-developed character; a freshness and originality of thought, and liberality of sentiment and feeling, known in rare instances to English society in the mother land. Many, most have been entrusted with power, have been detached on small commands; if civilians, have been little kings in their several districts. Their reading has not been from book, but from the works of the Most High. If their judgment be not always sound, it is almost always their own, and not taken at second or third hand from the presiding deities of a village or country town.

And then, meeting fellow-countrymen always as fellow exiles and brother officers, knowing by fame the character of each several associate, whom to select and whom to shun. Living ever on the wing, and bound to make the most of a little space of time, they fall naturally and gracefully into sudden and

unreserved intimacy, which leads to the most devoted friendship. Restricted as is this society in number, deficient as it generally is in learning and accomplishments, brief as are the unions of the several circles formed, yet I am not sure that the world possesses anything more amiable.

When a member of such a society, after long pining for his country, suddenly finds himself restored to it, he anticipates an improvement in the social circle, consequent to more cultivated talents and a wider choice of material. In London, undoubtedly, he may find this, if he be fortunate: in the country he never can. But, although he should anywhere find it, he will miss the frank, manly manners, the ready hospitality, the unfettered thought and liberal views, familiar to him in the stations of Upper India.

In London he becomes part of a mighty element. He reconciles himself, after awhile, to his relative insignificance, in the pride of belonging to a body capable of such gigantic effects. He merges his individuality in the general mass; he thinks and feels as a patriot. Here, too, he has access to the world of letters; he watches the progress of thought and opinion in each civilised country of the globe. He may himself, if qualified, contribute his share to the stock of discovery or research; he may, despite his seeming obscurity, really occupy a rostrum, conspicuous to the eyes of the whole world; he may, like the engineer of some war steamer, though unseen of the crew and the enemy, be the guider and controller of the destinies of both.

But in the country, what is his fate? Is it solitude? that intercourse of the soul with the Great Spirit of the universe, through the glorious creations of his hand. Alas, nature has ceased to be. All that he sees around him reminds him of the dull supremacy of man. Would he share with the conqueror his triumphs? Would he become a clipper of hedges, a perpetrator of dead walls, a procreator of ducks and

goslings, a forcer of cucumbers and pumpkins, a fattener of the unclean beast, a physiognomist in turnips, a classifier of onions, a hero amongst gardeners, graziers, and "guse-gibbies"?

Or, would he turn his ambition to the circle of his fellow creatures around him. Become a potent listener of parish debates. An unquestionable authority in matters relating to the gutters for draining the church, or in the code of regulations for the parish pound. Would he beat the barber out of the field in parish politics, and foil the sexton in parish metaphysics, and feel a quicker throb of the generous pulses of the heart at overhearing the village tailor pronounce him a wit. If he has a relish for such occupations, an ambition for such distinction; talent and genius here will tell; and assuredly he who has the courage to run the risk of defeat by such worthies as we have enumerated deserves, upon success, a crown of Dandelions.

But, if he cannot reconcile his spirit to the descent, he will here find himself sadly out of elememt: unless his fortune enable him to fill his house with a constant succession of guests from distant parts. He is, here, as much a cypher in the scale of being as in London; but here, he has no countervailing recompense. The power and effects of the system to which he belongs are not manifest. On the contrary, it seems a system of littleness. The grounds are portioned into Lilliputian fields, the houses are contracted, as for the abode of butterflies. The streams are fettered, the trees are numbered, the winds are broken in to the drudgery of the mill. The fire is sold by scale and balance, and light is measured out for gold with a niggard hand. And they who have wrought this outrage upon a fair creation, are themselves the most cramped and dwindled of the objects around. Their eyes can take in but the minute particles, into which they have minced the material; their minds can grasp but the petty considerations to which they have

resolved their moral world. If they had themselves risen into splendour upon the ruins of nature, we might pardon them; but to have trampled her in the dust, out of mere spite; to have spoiled that, by which they have not the genius to profit: this was not only unjust, but ignoble.

I have endeavoured faintly to define some of the impressions which a transition from active and onerous duties in the East, to a London or country life of insignificance in England, stamped upon my mind. Is it necessary to qualify such remarks by dwelling upon the worth which I found amongst my fellow-countrymen? The delicacy of feeling, the high sense of honour, the independence of spirit, the generosity and courtesy, existing nowhere else in like degree, within the compass of my wanderings. The disadvantages I have spoken of, are the inevitable result of particular circumstances. The virtues I am recording, are the effects of a pure faith, and a free constitution, upon dispositions naturally noble.

CHAPTER LIV.

Return to Calcutta—Summud Khauniana.

AT the expiration of my allotted term, I bade farewell, once more, to my native land, and proceeded to Calcutta, via Paris, Genoa, Rome, Naples, Malta, Athens, Alexandria, and Bombay.

It has been my purpose to devote a single chapter to each of these cities on my route, not as descriptions of objects so repeatedly described, but rather as impressions of a mind that has been exercised in a somewhat peculiar manner. But my time is up. My pen is worn to a stump. The work of a year has been crowded into a few months' space. My memory has been overtasked; and I am compelled to cast my volumes upon the world with a thousand imperfections, which would be inexcusable, were greater leisure in any way attainable. Events and scenes have swept over me and passed me with dazzling vivacity, and in endless succession. My eye is worn out with seeing, my mind is dimmed and exhausted with considering. The calls upon feeling have left me bankrupt. Meanwhile, my professional duties demand my attention. I have before me a journey by palankin of a thousand miles, with the prospect of being buried in a wilderness that distance from the means of publication.

If however my own adventures are for the present out of the question; those of my faithful follower, Summud Khaun are more compressible; and, as they seem to amuse my friends, they may, perhaps, find favour with the public.

Previous to quitting England, on so long a land

journey, I sought to provide in some way for the passage of Summud Khaun, who, I foresaw, must be, not only a ruinous expense to me, but a subject of infinite anxiety and vexation. I could have shipped him on board a sailing vessel for Bombay or Calcutta for about 50*l.*: but I felt assured he would perish on the voyage of sea-sickness and misery; for, as he was still as ignorant of any European language, or even the Hindustani dialect as ever, his position on board a vessel, without my protection and company, would have been insupportable. At the same time, his conveyance and that of his baggage were no joke. He could not occupy the the place of a lackey on the roof or basket of a carriage: and his baggage consisted of one large heavy trunk, and three sacks of sundries: for I wished him to have some remembrances of the countries he had visited. I finally decided upon his accompanying me on a journey, from which he derived more pain than interest or profit.

I took him at Paris, Genoa, and Rome, to see all that I supposed would interest him. The interior of St. Peter's, it may be believed, was the chief of these. The display of rich marbles, handsome sculpture, and gilt ornaments, dazzled and bewildered him, as much as the idolatry practised there shocked him: and the indelicacy of some of the ladies filled him with horror, which the manners of the servants' hall at the hotel tended to confirm. At Paris, that which most impressed him was the extent and excellence of the cuisine at Meurice's hotel. He spoke in glowing terms of the magic he there witnessed, and declared that the French are kings of the kitchen.

At Naples, the squalor and apparent want of the population touched his heart. One day I heard an immense hubbub outside the hotel, and presently the landlord ran in breathless to beg me to prevent my eastern gentleman from assembling at his door all the mob of Naples, by tossing handfuls of money amongst them. I sent for Summud, and asked him if the

charge was true. He replied, that it being Friday, he had distributed the usual alms, amounting to a handful or two of copper coins: that in an instant the whole population of the city seemed to have collected for the scramble, and that he had never seen so many beggars. The whole of that, and the three ensuing days, the house was beset with crowds, waiting for the appearing of his turban. It seemed, he said, to be a nation of beggars. I took him with me to the summit of Vesuvius. He was filled with amazement and awe. As we gazed down into the fiery pit, from which ever rises a huge column of sulphurous smoke, I explained to him that this had been deemed in former days the entrance to hell. I was extremely anxious to descend to the bottom of the crater. When Summud observed me, he roared, in the most earnest manner, his entreaty that I would return. I turned round, and invited him to follow. But the idea of walking deliberately and of choice into the jaws of Jehannum, was no part of his bargain as a follower. He stood his ground, declared that I should have full need of all his prayers, and that he would remain there and pray for me. The wind was adverse to my attempt, blowing the smoke upon the only footpath, and rendering it utterly impracticable. Indeed, as we skirted the crater, it came up in such suffocating volumes that we were once almost stifled; and Summud, instead of running, sat down in the midst of it to cough, so that I was obliged to drag him on by force.

I had explained to him that from this and a neighbouring fiery mountain we procured our sulphur; and I now shewed him that mineral strewing the summit of the volcano. "No wonder," he observed, "that your gunpowder is so deadly, when you gather it at the gate of hell."

I described to him the terrors of an eruption. The heavens swallowed up in red vapour, raining ashes, and hailing rocky fragments. The flames rushing up

through this lurid canopy, and torrents of liquid lava gushing over the crater, and sweeping everything before them to the sea. "The ocean himself," I said, "flies from this fiery deluge."

"Fly," he said, "his *father* would fly."

"This mountain," he observed, "must have sinned, that the Almighty should consume it with fire. But see how merciful is God. He has placed the sea at its foot, to prevent the farther spread of the mischief. Had this mountain been in Heraut, it had set the whole country on fire, for we have no water wherewith to quench it."

I would not destroy his view of the mercy of the All-merciful, by shewing him that water is one of the fiery principles which burst forth from Vesuvius; or rather *that* by the agency of which the pent fire is let loose from its thraldom. I have heard Christians reason as wisely upon the providence of the Most High.

On reaching Malta, he came to me to inquire whether there were any pigs in the island; I had seen none, and asked his reason.

"This is an English town, Sir, isn't it?"

"Yes! it is."

"Then I'll drink some milk here. I've had none, during the last fortnight."

"I ordered that you should be supplied; why did you not complain to me?"

"I was supplied. But would not touch it."

"Why! I hope you are not taking up that old silly whim about pig's milk?"

"It is no whim, Sir; I saw, with my own eyes, a little girl, of the hotel at Naples, milk the unclean One's mother for breakfast. Lah-hôl-wa-la-kowwut-illa-billahi."

This was the first time I had ever heard of tea made with sow's milk, and I could scarcely credit the relation. His account, however, was too circumstantial to admit of doubt; indeed he contrived to get

peeps behind the curtain of doings of which I should never have dreamed. On board the French steamer I had purchased him a second-class place amongst gentlemen; but sad complaints of him were brought me, and on going to the cuddy I found him excluded from the circle, and eating alone. I was angry, but on enquiring, found that he had insisted upon thrusting his hands into the dishes, in spite of all that could be said in good French to deter him, and that, when they pressed wine upon him, he had drawn his dagger, and frightened the cuddy boy into a fit, muttering all the while horrible sounds, being the Arabic line above quoted. The consequence was, that all the servants took a dislike to him, and rendered him very uncomfortable. One day, I found that he had nothing before him but sea-eggs. "Things, whose father," as he declared, "no one knew anything of."

The account he gave of the abominations used by the cook of the steamer, in the production of the exquisite dishes served at table was very horrible. I felt grateful for the schooling I had had in a Kuzzauk tent. I fancy his impression of French politeness was not favourable. One day, in travelling toward Marseilles, I occupied the front part of the diligence, and he had a seat in the rear. When we had proceeded some distance, it being night, I fancied I heard my name called in Persian, and looked out of the window in amaze. I again heard the sound, and thrusting my head out, found that it proceeded from Summud Khaun, who was calling upon me for help. I stopped the diligence, leapt out, and ran to his assistance. He was blubbering and roaring alternately, and it was long ere I could ascertain the cause. At length, I found that he accused the man in front of him of spitting in his face, and pulling his beard. I opened the door, climbed the steps, and insisted upon an explanation. The offender, a soldier of the guards, was much too drunk to render any; but his comrade, and the other passengers, replied for him, that he was

very sick from drunkenness, and that he might have spluttered a little over my Turk; that my Turk had seized him by the throat in the most unchristian-like manner, and that he had pulled my Turk's beard in retaliation.* I explained to Summud this, but he would not be pacified. He could not fetter his conscience by winking at the crime of drunkenness, and, after having been stopped again by a fresh *fracas*, I was obliged to bribe the man who sat next me, to change places with Summud, who declared he would leap out under the wheels, rather than sit where he was.

In the steamer from Malta to Athens, were a poor man and his wife, with whom Summud shared all his little luxuries. The woman had a young pup, which was one of the Feringee mysteries that perplexed poor Summud. "What *can* she pet that unclean animal for?" he enquired.

"Why," I said, "women must have something to lavish their affections upon; and if heaven has denied them children, they often adopt cats, dogs, or parrots. It is one of the mysteries of the human heart."

Some days subsequent to this, he came and said, "Do you know, Sir, what the woman keeps that puppy dog for? You told me, it was to fondle, and I thought that sufficiently horrible; but after awhile, it struck me that I saw no provision made for the food of this imp of uncleanness, and I determined to watch; so one night, whilst I lay awake, I heard the thing screaming for food, until at last it woke the woman. Now, I said, we shall see. And what do you think I saw? The woman gave this son of defile-

* "It is very hard," said Summud Khaun, "that I should be so baited by drunken men; I'm sure I've done my duty toward them. I killed two of them at Heraut, and was very nearly hanged in consequence. They blasphemed God and the Prophet. I rebuked them. They continued their blasphemy, and I rode up and split their skulls with my battle-axe. The friends of the second had me imprisoned. I was many weeks in quod; but fortunately there had been witnesses of the deed, who testified that I had only done the duty of a good Moosulmaun."

ment the breast. Lah-hôl-wa-la-kowwut-illá-billahi! What will Shauh Kaumraun say, when I tell him I have seen a people, whose daughters milk the mother of the unclean One, and are themselves milked by the sons of defilement, Lah hôl!"

At Athens, I bargained that he should live at the table of the hotel keeper. A day or two afterwards, mine host came to beg I would tell Summud not to carry loaded pistols always in his belt, for not only were the women in a fluster about it, but the Police might some day be upon him; as no one may bear arms in Greece, without special licence. I warned him accordingly: but he replied, that he had good reason for the precaution, and when urged further, shrugged up his shoulders, and was silent.

The next day, the master of the hotel waited upon me and said, he had done his utmost to make my Turk comfortable: but to no purpose. He sat down to dinner armed to the teeth, and when he, the hotel keeper drank his health, after the English fashion, the Turk drew his dagger, and threatened to cut all their throats. I sent for Summud, and enquired into this. He replied, that the hotel keeper had offered him wine. That he had declined it. That it was pressed upon him, and he had replied in excellent Persian, that it was forbidden, and that if they loved him they would forbear. That on their urging it again, he had drawn his knife, and declared they had better cut his throat than press him. That he had made signs to this effect, and they had all taken to their heels.

I begged mine host not to press him to do what was forbidden to him.

He declared he had not pressed him. He had merely drank his health.

"He lies," said Summud, "he did press me. He said, (Goot, very Goot you,) and patted his breast, as much as to say, it will make you fat and hearty. He thinks I don't know what Goot means."

"Lah! Sir," said the poor hotel keeper, "I only said, 'your good health,' and put my hand upon my heart. It is all the English I know, Sir, and I thought the Turk had been in England, and was up to it."

He was much interested with the localities of Egypt, familiar to him in the Muhummedan traditions; and the Red Sea had even more charms for him, as he passed the spot where Moses cleft the waters, saw Sinai and Horeb in the distance, and passed within a few miles of Mecca. On arriving at Bombay, I procured him a passage to Kurrachee, and gave him letters and all the cash I could spare, to carry him to his native land. I heard of his safe arrival at Candahar, and of that of my other servants. I parted from him with regret, for we had seen and suffered much together. He is by far the most travelled Afghaun in the world; but was, unfortunately, so little disposed to turn his advantages to good account, that I fear he scarcely remembers the names of half a dozen of the cities through which he passed, although to fix them in his memory, I made him, at each, a present of some trifle. By the time he reached Candahar, he had prayed facing each point of the compass, having encircled Mecca. People were often curious to know what countryman he was. If I said, "an Afghaun," they would stare with open mouths, evidently supposing it was some species of buffalo. I therefore generally said he is a kind of Persian. This satisfied them, and they thought Xerxes must have been a rum-looking fellow. But it did not satisfy poor Summud, for the Persians are all heretics. He, therefore, one day said, "Call me an Arab, Sir."

"If you like it, I will, Summud, but they know of Arabs, in this country, only as horses, and you will be mistaken for a wild Yahoo, (galloway) to a certainty."

In England, the country clowns after staring, first at his petticoats, and then at his beard, became quite

muddled, and spoke of him in the neuter gender, to avoid accidents.

In the fate of Saleh Muhummud, the reader will probably take interest. This gallant young man reached Heraut in safety, and was received there with the warmest applause, and rewarded handsomely for his spirited services. He afterwards served under Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Conolly on his mission to Khiva. The following extract from a letter, dated Cabul, 12th July, 1841, will shew farther particulars. "Saleh Muhummud arrived at Cabul about three weeks ago. You may fancy how delighted I was to see him. He brought a packet from Lieutenant-Colonel Conolly by the direct route, through the Huzzuruh country. He returned by the same route, after remaining seven or eight days. He received in presents of shawls, pistols, and money, about 100*l*; your brother gave him a handsome watch. The land which I bought him at Heraut, has been confiscated by Yar Muhummud Khaun, the Vuzeer. I brought away his father, uncle, brothers, and cousins, all of whom the Vuzeer wished to torture."

So much was known of him when the first edition of these volumes was printed in Calcutta, in 1841. On Saleh Muhummud's return from Cabul to Khiva, with despatches for Lieut-Colonel Conolly, he found that that officer had gone to Kokaun, and from thence to Bokhara, where he hoped to liberate Colonel Stoddart. Thither, i. e., to Bokhara, Conolly summoned Saleh Muhummud, who accordingly left Khiva, in spite of the anxious dissuasion of the Khaun Huzurut, who assured him that evil would befall him from the monster ruling there. On entering the Bokhara territory, he was arrested, stripped of his property, and carried prisoner to the Ummeer. For the Ummeer, on learning of the Cabul outbreak, had closely imprisoned both Stoddart and Conolly in the citadel. Saleh Muhummud was imprisoned in another quarter of the same building, for fifty-two days. He was then

taken, with one Ulla Dād (a messenger from Shah Shouja, attendant upon Conolly) and with him thrust into a dry well in the jail of the city. Here he remained four months, in a condition truly horrible.

He was then, with some others, taken out and set at liberty. One of these, Yoosuph Roonie, was taken to the Tukht, a platform in the sand outside the fort, the ordinary place of execution. There he and two robbers, were thrown, and their throats were cut. A young son of the jailor, Meer Syud Sherèef, ran in to Stoddart and Conolly saying, they have killed Yoosuph Roonie and two others with him. Conolly said, "Those two others must have been Saleh Muhummud and Ulla Dād." This being denied, he privately sent to Saleh Muhummud, desiring some sign that he still lived. Saleh replied that at Khiva, he, Colonel Conolly, had said, that the earth revolves upon its axis; to which Saleh had answered, "How can that be? We should all be sent up to the skies." Hearing this, Colonel Conolly was assured of Saleh's existence, and begged him not to quit Bokhara.

About seven days after Saleh's release, Conolly and Stoddart were removed from the citadel, and stript of their garments. A written paper was found upon Colonel Stoddart. He was summoned before the Ummeer, who asked him how, and from whom he had received that paper. He refused to tell. He was thrown upon his back, and beaten upon the soles of his feet, until the flesh peeled off. But he remained constant. He was then carried to the prison in the city, and was that night murdered secretly in a ruined house of that enclosure; his throat being cut, and the head taken off.

Conolly was then brought before the Ummeer, who offered him his life, upon condition of his undergoing circumcision. He replied boldly, "You circumcised Colonel Stoddart, and now have murdered him. What faith is there in your word? I am ready for death." The fatal sign was given. He was led away and

murdered that night in the prison, but by a different executioner.

Secretly as this hellish work was performed, it was whispered throughout the city, and reached Saleh's ears. He went to one of the executioners to certify himself of the truth. The man confirmed the report, and offered, for a sum of money, to shew him their heads. But Saleh had no heart to witness the sight, had he possessed the means of bribing the executioner. He was satisfied that the British officers were killed, and that he had no farther business at Bokhara, where his own life was in hourly jeopardy.

He went to an officer who was friendly to him. (I purposely forbear mentioning the name) and demanded a passport, without which no man can leave Bokhara. The officer replied, "Why have you clad yourself?" He answered that some charitable people had enabled him to do so. The officer enquired whether he knew that the British officers had been killed. He affected ignorance, being afraid to betray his informant. The officer said, "They have been killed, and your only chance is to move off in a beggar's attire." This Saleh did; and joining a caravan, reached Khiva, where the Khaun Huzurut was most friendly, and supplied him with a horse, arms, dress, cash, and guides to Meshed.

He arrived safely, and a sum of money, as a remuneration of his losses and services, was bestowed upon him by the British Government, and he continued an exile at Meshed until the sum was nearly expended; when thinking I might be able to provide for him in India, he endeavoured to reach me, viâ Bulkh and Cabul. The Ummeer of Cabul would not suffer him to pass, but sent him back in winter over the snowy passes, with an order to the Governor of Heibuk to set him adrift trans-Caucasus, the territory of Bokhara, where the first person he met would either murder or enslave him. Before they had found it convenient to do this, he escaped by night, and after many

perilous adventures reached Heraut, and from thence Meshed.

When recovered from his fatigues, he again started in quest of me: but now by the route of the Persian Gulf, in company with his son, a fine boy of about twelve years. They took fever on the voyage, and were landed half dead at Kurrachee. Some kind gentleman found them there apparently dying on the strand, and had them conveyed to the hospital. When recovered, they got on board a passenger boat, and came up the Indus. They arrived in the utmost distress at Mooltan, whence Saleh wrote me, through the commissioner.

I had just left Huzura, and was, as I supposed, on my way to England, whither I was summoned by family affliction. All power to serve or to provide for poor Saleh was lost. Mr. John Lawrence, however, kindly interested himself in his behalf; and in spite of many difficulties the M. N. the Governor General in Council, on hearing the particulars of his case, settled upon him a pension of 150*l.* per annum.

The reader who has honoured my pages with his attention, will remember my description of the hopeful, light-hearted, Saleh Muhummud. I found him sadly altered. So broken in spirits, from incessant misfortune, as scarcely to retain a capacity for hope. I left him residing at Heshiarpoor, in the Punjaub.

Of the fate of the Kuzzauk brothers, I have not yet been able to gather tidings. I fear they were not rewarded as they deserved. Hussun Mhatoor was pardoned on my intercession, and the Kuzzauk guides were probably screened by him.

The result of this mission is now matter of history, yet so little known, that it may be worth while to record it. It is narrated by my successor at Khiva, Sir Richmond Shakespeare, in a paper published in *Blackwood's Magazine*, No. 320, of June, 1842.

The release of the Russians in slavery at Khiva had been negotiated by me. But it would not have been

wise to have freed them whilst a Russian army was actually marching upon the capital; their release being the object least considered by Russia in the expedition. When, however, the severity of the season had discomfitted the Russian army of invasion, and obliged it to retreat upon Orenburgh, the fitting time for their release was come; and Sir R. Shakespeare took advantage of it to persuade the Khaun Huzurut to sent them all, under his protection, back to Russia. This was happily accomplished. Six hundred hapless wretches, who had lost all hope of ever again beholding their native land, were suddenly released from the most cruel slavery; were clad, fed, and provided with means of transport, and restored to their country, and to whatever heaven might have left them of homes.

In return, six hundred Oozbegs and Toorcumuns, whom I had seen pining in the prisons of Russia, were, in like manner, released and sent home; and Russia was left without a plea for extending her empire 1,500 miles in the direction of India.

And thus, by the opportune agency of natural causes, acting in concert with the prompt and ever watchful zeal of an envoy at Heraut (the lamented and highly-gifted Major D'Arcy Todd) an expedition which portended woe and disaster to Asia and to Europe, ended in peace and in blessings to the opprest.

In the brief space recorded in these volumes the author lived many years (if reckoned by suffering, thought, anxiety, experience,) of ordinary human existence. He had the advantage of viewing events and feelings, generally widely scattered, condensed together into a closeness of contact, that admitted of the strongest contrasts and most searching comparisons. The one great object of his search through life he kept constantly before his eyes: endeavouring to divest his mind of prejudice and partiality, and by rigid analysis, to separate the most pure gold of truth

from every debasing alloy. Viewing his sufferings and anxieties as the means vouchsafed him for an end so glorious, he did not style pain evil; he did not presume to dictate the future to that Hand which was leading him; he did not pray for deliverance, but only for courage to encounter, and for wisdom to profit by his troubles; he did not consider that his individual interests were worthy to interfere with that grand scheme of Providence, which has been arranged by an All-wise Intelligence for a purpose, and upon a plan, inscrutable to human eyes. Neither did he believe that the being he had received from his Maker could ever be lost from the memory of his God.

It pleased Heaven, by a tissue of remarkable and unexpected events, to carry him through all his adventures, and to crown his efforts with the most signal success. The contrary result would not have altered his estimate of Divine goodness, founded as it is upon no partial or confined view of the system around him; for as he cannot but regard that period of suffering as the most valuable portion of his life, so, had he failed in his enterprise, and reaped disgrace instead of honour, he would not have been utterly forsaken. The sense of having done his utmost, with the purest views, would have supported him; and his firm belief in the sympathising eye of Divine Benevolence would have been his consolation.

The reader must forgive these closing remarks. The world, and the shifting scenes of life, are the pageant of a moment. The moral we may deduce, the experience we may reap therefrom, are more enduring. Regarded with a view to such deduction, even the petty and otherwise grovelling incidents of our history become ennobled; at least, they are our slaves, and not our tyrants. And the graver and deeper cares and sufferings raise us above ourselves, instead of crushing and degrading us. And as soldiers reckon the post of danger that of honour and confidence, so will he, who rightly reads the mystery of

Being, look upon every fresh suffering as a fresh opportunity of strengthening and perfecting by exercise the talents and powers entrusted to him.

But the scenes through which I passed were productive of farther and gratifying results. I saw human nature in a variety of phases; but the good was never eclipsed by the evil. Amongst the Oozbegs, the just, and kind, and honourable Khaun Huzurut, the generous and hospitable Mooraud Ali. Amongst the Toorcumuns, Khojeh Muhummud. Amongst the Kuzzauks, Cherkush Bae—calm, courageous, faithful, affectionate—and the wife of Ahris Mhatoor, an honour to her sex. Amongst the Russians I met goodness everywhere. Amongst the Herauties, Saleh Muhummud, one of the finest characters in the world, when I knew him, and my own poor servants, faithful to me amid a thousand perils and trials. But in my own country, and amongst my own people (let me name with reverence the name of Butterworth Bayley), I saw this goodness in its noblest dress, cultivated, cherished, married to every virtue that can adorn the mind and conduct of man.

END OF THE JOURNAL.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

HAD we searched the Map of the World, 577 years ago, for the empire, or Khaunaut of Tartary, we should have found its boundaries stretching Northward to Moscow; Southward to Delhi; reaching on the East the Gulf of Tartary; and on the West, the river Euphrates; a dominion larger than the present empire of Russia. If, in the present day, our eye is directed to a similar search, we find but the nucleus of that magnificent empire, in three small and comparatively powerless states; Khaurism (or Khiva), Kokaun, and Bokhara, of which the second is accounted the richest, and the first, the most powerful.

These States, which occupy a nearly square area of 900 miles on the East of the Caspian, being girt for the most part by deserts, and rude mountains, infested by predatory tribes; and being themselves in a state of barbarism, little above the condition of savages, are amongst the least known portions of our Globe. Bokhara, indeed, by her traffic with Russia, has of late years in some measure disinterred herself from oblivion. But the designs Russia has long manifested upon Khaurism, have recently led to jealousies and hostilities, that have prevented the latter state from benefiting by intercourse with her more civilized neighbour. Kokaun and Bokhara do not belong to the province of the following remarks upon the geography and statistics of Khaurism.

2. BOUNDARIES OF THE KINGDOM OF KHAURISM, GENERALLY KNOWN UNDER THE TITLE OF ITS CAPITAL, KHIVA, OR KHAYWA.—The boundaries of Khaurism are, on the North the small rivers Yem, Djem or Embah, and Irghiz, by which it is severed from the country of the Khirgheez, a tribe of Kuzzauks dependent upon Russia. On the South an irregular line from the river Attruck to Punjdeeh. On the West it is the coast of the Caspian. On the East the terminal

line is ill-defined, or rather imaginary, including, by a course nearly North and South about 350 miles of the sandy desert east of Khiva; then crossing the Oxus in the latitude of Bokhara, and thence stretching S.E. through a Desert of sand, to the hill country of Heraut and Caubul.

3. DIMENSIONS.—The mean length of the kingdom is about 750 miles, its mean breadth about 600. The area enclosed, 450,000 square miles.

4. ASPECT.—Few countries present so uniform an appearance: for with the exception of the short and narrow tract bordering the left bank of the Oxus, and the well-watered sands of Merv, Khaurism may be described as a wide desert plain, without rivers or springs, woods or mountains; where the plough has never turned a glebe, nor the wilderness yielded to the industry of man. This wide waste plain is not, however, such a desert as we read of in Lybia and Arabia, although from the latitude of Khiva to that of Merv, the plain is a broken and irregular surface of deep sand, for the most part destitute of grass; for even here, there springs a growth of brushwood, offering excellent fuel, and the thorny herb which the camel loves. And from the latitude of Khiva, to the northern limits of the kingdom, the soil is a firm clay stratum, resting upon shell limestone, and covered with a low growth of wormwood and another dark brown herb.

5. The sandy surface is not cast into regular undulations, as might be expected, could its irregularities be ascribed to the action of the winds; but is broken into hillocks and pits, that defy theoretical speculation. The clay surface is sometimes quite level, but more generally swelling to form deep ravines, the course of which is nearly S. S.West. On approaching from Khiva the promontory of Mungh Kishlauk, the country is broken up, by some former operation of the sea, into wide level valleys, walled in by cliffs of chalk and marle, surmounted by the aforesaid shell limestone and clay. The isthmus between Mungh Kishlauk and the Bay of Tiouk Karasoo (on which stands the Russian fort of Nuov Alexandrof) is a triple chain of mountains of red sandstone, not less than 1500 or 2000 feet higher than the level of the Caspian. These and the mountains of Balkaun are the only hills I could learn of in the country; but the plateau between the Caspian and Aral seas has, by my estimate, about 2000 feet of elevation, and the Russians speak of still higher land, lying immediately South of the Yem or Embah. There are also one or two trifling limestone summits on the eastern

banks of the river Oxus, and about forty miles North of Khiva, and it is said that gold was once found in these, although the formation promises no such product.

6. CLIMATE.—The climate of Khaurism is more various than its surface or extent would lead a stranger to anticipate. On the table land of the Isthmus of Khaurism (i.e. between the Caspian and Aral Seas) the snow of winter lies during five months, to the depth of four or five feet, and the thermometer sinks to 40° of Reaumur. Even at Khiva, the river Oxus is hard frozen during four months, although the latitude corresponds with that of Rome; and snow lies for several months, melting in the sun's rays, but so hard congealed in the shade, as never to be compressible into masses; travellers, and those who cut wood in the wilderness, are frequently lost in snow storms, when the snow will sometimes fall five or six feet in depth, and the air is so searching, that the warmest furs will not resist it. Water froze in the small room I occupied at Khiva at the distance of three feet from the charcoal fire; and even at mid-day, when the sun was unobscured, the vapour of my breath collected in large masses of hoar frost and ice upon my beard and Tartar cap. Yet in summer, the heat at Khiva is almost insufferable; linen clothes can scarcely be borne; and it is impossible to sleep beneath the roof. People exposed to the sun die in consequence. These great extremes terminate about midway between Merv and Khiva. At Merv, indeed, the heat of summer is sufficiently oppressive, as every ray of the sun is multiplied by the sands of the surrounding deserts; but in winter, although snow falls, it is immediately melted by the heat of the soil. Yet Merv, although 5° farther South than Khiva, has a higher elevation above the sea's level, as the course of its river attests. The cause of the excessive cold of Khiva may be simply explained. Khiva is situated midway between the frozen wastes of Siberia and the burning deserts of Arabia and Persia. The prevalent wind, therefore, is from the N. East, and blows over an uninterrupted waste of about 100°, covered in winter with ice and snow. The intense chill of this wind must be felt to be conceived. Any portion of the human frame exposed to it is paralysed and destroyed. Of the Toorcumuns sent to oppose the Russian expedition, numbers were brought back mutilated: some had lost an arm, others a foot, others the whole cheek or the nose. The lips, and even the tongue, were in some cases destroyed. The position of Khiva in the midst of a sandy desert renders intelligible the extreme heat of the summer months. I regret that I cannot give the

variations of the thermometer; my instrument was early begged of me by the Mehtur (Vuzeer), and I was so ill-provided with presents, that I thought it prudent to comply with the demand. The spring is described as being delightful, and the desert may sometimes be passed in the summer months, as it is always less sultry than Khiva, and is occasionally overshadowed with clouds from the Caspian. Such great extremes of heat and cold are undoubtedly trying to the constitution. Yet Khiva appears to be generally salubrious, at least it is found so by the Tartars and others, whose habits of life give them sufficient exercise. Even the lazy and inert Oozbeg seems to thrive. Upon the high table land of the Isthmus the heat is never excessive, being tempered alike by the elevation of the soil, and by clouds passing between the seas.

7. CASPIAN SEA.—The Caspian, although it forms the western boundary of Khaurism, can scarcely be said to belong to this realm; for the Yahmoot Toorcumuns of the Balkaun who navigate it, have thrown off allegiance to the Khaun Huzurut, and the boats possessed by other tribes of this race are few, and extremely small. It nevertheless seems necessary to describe this sea or lake, because its navigation is of vital importance to the interests of Khaurism.

BASIN OF THE CASPIAN.—The basin of the Caspian is a shell limestone, precisely similar to that which forms the plateau between its shores and Khiva. It is remarkable, that the whole of this immense mass, often elevated several hundreds of feet above the present level of the Caspian, contains but the three shells, viz., the cockle, mussel, and spirorbis, which are the sole productions of the waters of the Caspian. It might hence be inferred, that the Caspian is at present depressed above a thousand feet below its ancient level; were not the supposition irreconcilable with the features of the neighbouring lands. Had these vast strata of shell limestone been the deposit of the ocean, they must have contained other shells than those, which they yield to research. They are therefore the deposit of the Caspian, not of the ocean, to which the Caspian could not have been united, when those shells were deposited. But the number of cycles requisite for their formation, and for so entire a change as has since happened to so wide a surface of the globe, is a consideration which leads back the mind, beyond the depth of its comprehension, in the ocean of Time.

EASTERN COAST OF THE CASPIAN.—The Eastern coast of the Caspian is generally smooth and shelving. The bays and

gulfs are therefore extremely shallow, which does not agree with the great height of the cliffs of the N. East shore, seldom less than 700 feet above the level of the water. The water is remarkably clear, very salt, but not bitter. The immense volume of fresh water poured into this sea by the Volga, the largest of the European rivers, abates the saltness of the northern portion; an effect further increased by the congelation of the waters during the winter months; when the gulf of Mertvoi is frozen over, and ice of several miles breadth, extends along the coast, as far as the Bay of Balkaun, altogether suspending navigation in those regions.

PORTS OF THE CASPIAN.—The Ports, if such they may be termed, on the Eastern coast of the Caspian, are Nuov Alexandrof, in the inlet of Karasoo (or the black water), the promontory of Mungh Kishlauk, and the Bay or Gulf of Balkaun.

The most important port on this coast is the promontory of Mungh Kishlauk, a name belonging to a considerable district South and South-West of Nuov Alexandrof. It is hither that the Russian vessels from Astrakhan used to resort, to convey to that city the Bokhara caravans. It is distant about 480 miles from Khiva. It possesses no fixed habitation, but is well peopled by Kuzzauks, who here pasture their flocks of sheep and herds of galloways and camels. It is open to navigation about a month earlier than Nuov Alexandrof, and is in every respect a preferable port; the navigation from thence to Astrakhan being easy, and frequently accomplished in a single day. The Island of Koolali, a small Russian settlement, is visible from hence, and within a few hours' sail. Koolali was girdled with ice when I saw it on the 13th April, 1840. The Russians, about two years ago, landed at Mungh Kishlauk, and marked out the site of a fort upon the heights, but the foundation was never laid.

GULF OF BALKAUN.—The Gulf of Balkaun, taking its name from the mountains so called, is in possession of a tribe of Yahmoot Toorcumuns, who have thrown off allegiance to Khiva, and subsist by plundering the small craft of the Russians.

BAY OF KARA BEEGHAZ.—The bay of Kara Beeghaz lies North of that of Balkaun on the eastern coast of the Caspian. It does not appear to be much frequented as a port, and was not mentioned to me as such, when I was about to seek the Russian frontier from Khiva. Amongst other reasons may be that rush of the Caspian into this bay, which was reported to Moravief by the Toorcumuns of the Steppe, and which seems to have led to the supposition that the Cas-

pian hence found a subterranean communication with the sea of Aral. It is difficult to account for such a rush of water from a tideless sea, if, indeed, the fact be correctly stated. Moravief passed close to the southern brink of a salt lake, called Kooli Derria-ab, sixty miles* N. East of the Bay of Balkaun. He was told that it was ten miles in length, and communicated with the Bay of Kara Beeghaz, in which case he probably made more North latitude at the outset than the maps of his route generally show. That there should be any rush of water from the Caspian to the Aral is impossible, the Caspian being 113 feet lower than the Aral; but springs probably follow the old course of the Oxus to the Bay of Balkaun, and may have given rise to the fable of a subterranean connection between the seas.

KINDERLINSK BAY.—This bay is still further on the eastern coast of the Caspian than that of Kara Beeghaz. I heard nothing concerning it whilst in Khaurism.

The Russians monopolize the trade of the Caspian; I may add, its navigation. As the sturgeon, the salmon, and another large and delicate fish abound in this sea, the fisheries are very valuable; and, so far as I can learn, the Russians have several hundreds of decked vessels, besides small craft, some employed in fishing, and the remainder in merchandize. Owing to the wide extent of shoal water on the eastern coast, the vessels are built without keels, but with round bottoms. The water in the inlet of Karasoo is extremely shallow.

SEA OF ARAL.—Of the Sea of Aral, it is difficult to procure any particulars from a people so barbarous as the Kuzzauks, who alone are familiar with it. The following are to be regarded rather as conjectures than established facts. The water is too salt to be drunk by man or beast, excepting at the mouths of the rivers Oxus and Jaxartes. The water is shallow, but navigable by small craft. The eastern coast appears to be low, with occasional hillocks. The foot of the Ust Urt heights between the two seas gives elevation to part of the western shore.

At the mouth of the Oxus are many islands, and near the centre of the sea is one of considerable extent. Brushwood is found along the margin, but no timber is known in Khaurism, excepting where human industry has reared it in the neighbourhood of Khiva. Little, if any, wood is floated down the Oxus. The reason may be, the predatory habits of

* Moravief's calculations of distances travelled by him are exactly double the actual measurement. He makes Khiva from the Balkaun Bay 674 miles, whereas it is 360, or twelve camel marches of 30 miles.

the tribes infesting its shores; but I could not learn of the existence of forests on the margin of this river, within the power of its current. The boats upon the Sea of Aral are merely small fishing craft, belonging to the Aral Oozbergs and Kara Kulpauks, dwelling on its coasts. They are few in number.

The name of this sea is Dungiz-i-Khaurism, or the sea of Khaurism. The name Aral is never applied to it by Asiatics, and belongs to a tribe of Oozbegs dwelling near that sea.

RIVERS OF KHAURISM.—The rivers of Khaurism ore the Aumoo or Oxus, the Sirr or Jaxartes, and the Awb-i-Mowr, called by us the Moorghaub.

SIRR OR JAXARTES.—Of the Sirr I could learn little or nothing, during my residence at Khiva, being prohibited from intercourse with the natives. It is known only to the Kuzzauks who live on its borders, and the few merchants that pass from Bokhara to Orenburgh. Its waters are the glory and the life of the Tartar kingdom of Kokaun; but its course through Khaurism chiefly enlivens a desert of sand.

Meyendorff, who crossed it near its estuary, reckons the breadth there at 120 yards, or 360 feet, and its depth at 24 feet. But he believes the breadth to be much wider at Kokaun, because the river Komoun, one of its almost abandoned channels, carries off still much of the water, which it wastes in the sands, or deposits in insignificant lakes. If we suppose one-third to be the diminution, we shall have for the main stream of the Sirr 460 feet, the extreme depth being 24 feet. If we assume 12 feet as the mean depth, we shall have a section of 5980 square feet, at a point where the river has some velocity of current, viz., at Kokaun.

If we now take Burnes's measurement of the Oxus, near Charjovee, viz., 650 yards, or 1950 feet, with an average depth of 16 feet, we have a sectional surface of 31,200 feet, or more than five times that of the Sirr. If, therefore, at these points, the currents of the two rivers be equal, then the water poured into the plain of Khiva is more than five times that contained in the channel of the Sirr.

RIVER AUMOO OR OXUS.—The river Aumoo is to Khaurism, what the Sirr is to Kokaun. It enters Khaurism by a sandy desert: but flowing onward, reaches a fertile clay plain, over which its waters are distributed by numerous canals. This plain is about 200 miles in length, by about 60 of average breadth, and produces grain for the supply of the bulk of the Tartar population, as well as for export to

Khorussaun. In ancient times, the course of the Aumoo, after passing Khiva, was a bold curve, by which it rolled its waters into the Gulf of Balkaun in the Caspian. The river valley and channel are still in existence, to attest the truth of this statement; and the Russians talk of turning the stream into its former course, should they gain possession of Khiva; a work which, besides adding to the productiveness of the kingdom, would afford the convenience of river navigation from the Caspian to Khiva.

Of the Oxus, so much has been written in Sir Alexander Burnes' interesting Narrative, that I shall content myself with the details of only those facts which came under my observation, and the observations naturally resulting therefrom.

When it is gravely asserted, that a large river did, some centuries back, follow a course very different from its present, so as to disembogue its waters into a sea, now severed from it by a desert of 350 miles, strong proofs will be expected in support of the theory; especially, when in order to such a termination, the river must have turned off suddenly, at an abrupt angle, from its direct course.

If, however, in addition to the records of the past, we have before our eyes the undoubted channel, through which the river flowed to that distant sea, it is impossible longer to withhold our credence, and we have only to reconcile (as best we may), the phenomenon with the established system of nature. An earthquake is one of those universal specifics which a philosopher would adopt, only when other expedients fail him. It is true, that earthquakes are more frequent than our brief space of existence leads us to imagine, but I do not remember an instance on record of so large a river as the Oxus having by such agency been deflected from its course; and although the power of an earthquake be quite equal to such an effect, yet I would not be the first to establish a precedent of this nature without abundant proof.

The subject cannot be fairly examined without the aid of a map of Khaurism. Burnes has not examined it, but has regarded the theory as absurd, and considers the channels existing between Astrabad and Khiva to be "remains of some of the canals of the kingdom of Khaurism, being supported in this belief by the ruins near them, which have been deserted as the prosperity of that empire declined."

But this support seems very inconclusive, inasmuch as the ruins spoken of would be deserted just as certainly if abandoned by the river, as by the failure of the canal; and, more-

over, we need appeal to none, who have ever attended to the phenomena of large rivers, for the impossibility of mistaking a deserted canal for the channel of a river such as the Oxus; which, after hollowing out for itself a valley some miles in breadth, ploughs up a furrow several hundred feet deeper than the earth's level, and wide enough for a stream of 800 feet span. This valley and furrow I have myself seen, the latter filled with melted snow. Its course bearing toward the Gulf of Balkaun, in a situation where any detour to the North was impracticable, owing to high table land. This channel was also seen by Moravief,* lower down, and is spoken of by the people of the country as extending to the Balkaun. I conceive the fact to be so fully established by my own observation, and that of others, that I shall proceed to show how the Oxus might have abandoned its original channel, without any assistance from convulsions of Nature.

In the days of Alexander the Great, the course of the Oxus, after having been unusually straight, suddenly turned W. S. West, at nearly a right angle. What can have led to this deviation we cannot now determine. We know, however, that rivers do not always find a channel free of impediment, even when they have found the lowest level for their waters; and on the bank of the Oxus we everywhere meet with wide valleys walled in with cliffs, some of which cliffs are not above 100 yards in breadth. We also know, that every river seeks to plough for its waters the straightest possible course. That, under this attempt, its banks are constantly wearing away, and that its power to effect such a purpose is in exact proportion to the strength of its current, and the abruptness of the angle it would overcome. Unless, therefore, the obstacle be a rocky mass, the straightening of any river's course is an inevitable operation of nature, and its deviation from a direct to a curvilinear course is the *phenomenon*.

Now, if we cast our eye upon the map of Khaurism, we shall see, that the Oxus has merely obeyed a known law of nature; it has, by the efforts of we know not how many thousand years, worn out the curb to its onward course, and pursued the impulse hurrying it naturally toward the Sea of

* Moravief twice encountered this river channel, first at the distance of 250 miles from the Gulf of Balkaun. We have to reduce his measurements of distance travelled to one half for a correct result; and again, he met with it at Bish Tishik, the wells of which are in its bed. He estimates the actual channel at 600 feet breadth, and the cliffs which scarp it at 90 feet; and he saw northward another line of cliffs following its course, which he supposes to be an old shore of the sea, but which were, probably, the scarps of the river basin.

Aral. And if we observe the other feeder of this sea, the river Sirr or Jaxartes, we shall perceive, that after emerging from the hills, its course is a slight curve, bowing to the North. We shall also observe that there are a variety of forsaken channels South of this river, and that the Southernmost, under the title of Djan Derriah, meets the Oxus on the South of the Sea of Aral. Now it is a necessary law of nature that when a river forms a variety of channels at a curvature, the outermost of these be the most recent; the innermost the most ancient. If therefore the Djan Derriah be not the original course of the Oxus, it has been formed by a convulsion of nature; but if nature has not been violated, then, some centuries back, the rivers Oxus and Sirr met, or almost met, a little North of Oorgunj. If they met, it is probable, that the Sea of Aral was a mere marsh receiving a small portion of the waters of the Sirr, and that the rivers continued in a single channel their course to the Caspian. In this case, the thrust from the N. East, of the waters of the Sirr, would have sufficed (without the aid of any extraordinary obstacle) to determine the future current of the Oxus to the S. West. But we perceive, that century by century, this thrust must have declined in power, as the Sirr naturally mined for itself a straighter course farther North; and in proportion as this deflecting power abated, the struggles of the Oxus would increase, to overcome its Northern barrier, and flow in a direct channel. Moreover, the path deluged by the waters of the Sirr, would afford such a channel for those of the Oxus; and accordingly, we see that after forsaking the Caspian, the latter has turned in the direction of the Sirr, deviating many degrees from a straight line.

It is not to be supposed that such changes are sudden and instantaneous; that the old channel is dried, and the new opened at once. They are generally the work of centuries. Rivers plough, every year, a deeper furrow, or fill up part of that furrow. The channel, which is partially abandoned, is every year more forsaken of its waters, which having found a lower level can no longer pursue their wonted course. In sandy deserts, the change is more rapid; for the partially abandoned channels are choked with sand: but in the case of the Oxus, which at its divergence occupies a firm clay bed, which it retains, I am informed, to the Gulf of Balkaun, it is probable that for more than a century, part of its waters continued to occupy their ancient course.

I have assumed that, which appeared to me the most probable, of the two alternatives. But even, if the Sirr never joined the Oxus, the gradual enfranchisement of the latter is a simple and constantly occurring process of nature; it may be added, an invariable process, where very great inequalities of level or where curbs of rocks, are not the fetter. But the soil of this valley, as appears evident whenever a section is examined, is not only not rocky, but one of the most infirm as regards resistance to water. Its superficies is sometimes shell limestone; but the stratum is seldom above two feet thick, and rests upon alternate strata of chalk and marle, of which the marle is often the basis. Marle derives from its argillaceous particles a strong attraction for water, which it imbibes thirstily, melting into the softest mud. Accordingly, the country, in the neighbourhood of these changes, is broken up, in the strangest manner, into wide level valleys, walled in with cliffs, any one of which, supposing its base not to be higher than the surrounding country, would serve as the basin to an extensive lake.

The greatest difficulty, in considering such changes, is to imagine a valley answering this description, sufficiently depressed below the channels of the Sirr and Oxus, to act as a receptacle for their waters. For these rivers having, time out of mind, ploughed the same furrow, might naturally be supposed to have penetrated the earth's surface, to a depth exceeding any neighbouring and extensive hollow. But, there is nothing unreasonable in supposing a suitable basin to exist; and we see that it does exist, and have no proof that its existence is attributable to any disorganization of nature.

Again, finding it to exist, and to be the receptacle of two rivers, we find it difficult to imagine a time when it was a mere valley. But when the waters of the Sirr flowed through their southernmost channel (the Djan Derriah) some obstacle, such as a range of cliffs, of which there are so many in that neighbourhood, may have cut off the Sirr from this valley, as, there can be little doubt, they cut off the Oxus from it. For we need not observe, that rivers do not hollow out, but rather fill up their receptacles, by the sediment from their waters; so that the sea of Aral must yearly be growing shallower, in proportion as its river channels deepen: an effect, that may, some thousand years hence, force the rivers to seek a new course, or to resume their old channel to the Caspian.

The theory, which supposes the Oxus to have always poured

a portion of its waters into the sea of Aral, is utterly untenable: a river will never hesitate many years between a straight and a devious channel. The instant the Oxus found a straight course for any portion of its waters, all its power would be put forth to enlarge and deepen that course, to the neglect of the other. But if we go back to the time when both the Sirr and the Oxus were first let loose upon the plains of Tartary, and imagine the two streams meeting simultaneously at a point, a few miles South by West of the sea of Aral, we shall perceive, that their natural tendency from that spot would be to a course West by North, from which they must be deflected by the high table land they would meet in latitude 42°, which would determine their flow to the Gulf of Balkaun. There is, therefore, no need for convulsions of nature or prodigies, to account either for the original or the present course of the Oxus. Both are in perfect accordance with observed laws of nature; and the ancient channel exists to this day, to bid defiance to all scepticism upon the subject.

With regard to the very generally received notion, that there exists a subterranean communication from the Aral to the Caspian; it may suffice to observe, that the old channel of the Oxus to the Caspian, is the lowest land of the Kārā Koom, or desert of Khaurism; it is, therefore, the natural drain of all that country; and the report of travellers hearing sounds of subterranean waters at Kārā Goombuz may be perfectly true. It seems, however, improbable, that the sea of Aral should have any access to this drainage; and the waters there heard may be supplied by the snow and rain, which fall in considerable quantity between the seas. The waters of the Aral are so shallow that the evaporation from its surface, during six months, is probably greater than from any other considerable lake of which we know. A circumstance qualified by its state of congelation during four or five months yearly. Whether the evaporation from its surface, during seven months, be sufficient to dispose of the large body of water poured during twelve months into its basin, is an interesting problem: for the solution of which, however, I have not sufficient *data*.

A rough calculation may be made of the quantity of water poured annually by the Oxus and Jaxartes into the sea of Aral. Burnes, by an erroneous calculation, rates the average depth of the Oxus at nine feet. The data he offers, give us for the depth, by one measurement, twelve-and-a-half feet to a breadth of 2,469 feet: by another, sixteen feet to a breadth

of 1,950 feet. He calculates the flow at 6,000 feet per hour. The mean of these calculations would give us a breadth of 2,209 feet, a depth of fourteen feet, and a velocity of 6,000 feet per hour. At this rate, it would discharge hourly into the Aral 545,516,000 cubic feet of water; daily, 13,092,384,000 cubic feet; and yearly, 4,778,720,160,000 cubic feet.

Assuming Meyendorff's measurements of the river Sirr near its termination—viz., breadth, 360 feet; average depth, 20 feet; and allowing it a current equal to that of the Oxus, viz., of 6,000 feet per hour, we shall find that the Sirr discharges into the Sea of Aral, hourly, 43,200,000 cubic feet of water; daily, 1,036,800,000; and yearly, 378,432,000,000.

The Aral Sea, therefore, will receive yearly, from these two rivers, 5,157,152,160,000 cubic feet of water. And as the Aral is about 360 miles in average length, by about 240 miles in average breadth, the surface is an area of 86,400 square miles, or, 2,408,693,760,000 square feet. So that, were there no loss by evaporation, and absorption to the Aral, it would rise annually, from the supply of its rivers alone, about two feet, two inches. To this we must add the melted snow and the rain from the steppe around, and falling annually into this sea. And as the tributary steppe may be

roughly estimated at - - - - - 300,000 square miles,
and the Aral at - - - - - - - 86,400 „ „

The Total will give - - - - - - 386,400 „ „
or - - - - - - - - 10,772,213,760,000 square feet.

Rating the rain and snow upon this surface, that at least, which reaches the Aral, by rivers, rills, or otherwise, at half a foot upon each square foot of surface, we shall have an addition of two feet, two and a half inches more to the height of the Aral. This, added to the water from its rivers would raise it yearly four feet, four and a half inches, without probably much visible extension of surface.

The question is, whether the yearly evaporation and absorption are sufficient to carry this off. If not, the surface of the Aral must be increasing. For about four months in the year the evaporation is very small, owing to the half-frozen condition of the sea. During about two months more, it is not considerable, owing to rain and foggy weather. But for the remaining six months it must be very rapid. Because the sea is so shallow as to be soon heated, and has around it on three sides an arid desert, the wind of which is excessively thirsty.

Thus Burnes's companion, Dr. Gerard, at Bokhara, a region certainly far hotter and drier than that of the Aral, found by experiment that a basin of water was wholly evaporated by exposure for forty-eight hours to sun and wind. It seems, therefore, probable, that the whole of the water received annually by the Sea of Aral, is lost annually by evaporation and absorption; and that the surface of this Sea is neither spreading nor shrinking.

Burnes found by experiment that during the swell of the Oxus it held suspended in its waters 1-40 part of silt. Let us for an average,* reduce this to 1-160, and reckon the silt of the River Sirr at the same rate, and we have 32,232,201,000 cubic feet of silt poured yearly into the Aral, raising its bed yearly, 0.013 of an inch; or in 1,000 years thirteen inches. The average depth of the Aral is probably not more than twenty-six feet. It seems therefore impossible, that its basin should retain for ever a capacity for the waters of its affluents —the Sirr and Oxus. Undoubtedly, the necks of these rivers, near the sea, must receive a large portion of this silt, and be rising yearly with the bottom of the Aral; a circumstance which may again compel the Oxus to return to its ancient course—to the Caspian Sea.

Meyendorff was shewn a hillock near the North-East corner of the Sea of Aral, which he was assured was the not-very-ancient limit of the coast of that Sea; although at present distant sixty versts (forty miles) from it. This tradition is utterly improbable. The Aral has of late years, only, received the tribute of the Oxus. And unless the Oxus and Sirr are disappearing from the earth, it is scarcely possible, that the Sea of Aral should be shrinking. The yearly deposit of silt must raise the levels of its waters and extend their surface. If, indeed, such a flood as that of Moray should deluge the mountains in which the Sirr and Oxus rise, the level of the Aral might be unnaturally raised, and its surface extended for a few years. But such a flood would most probably be recorded by tradition. When the Sea of Aral was a mere bay of the Euxine and Caspian conjoined, no limit to its extent is assignable. But this is a period far antecedent to historical record.

The waters of the river Oxus are pure. Its breadth opposite Khiva is about 900 yards, and is greater as it approaches the sea of Aral; but there is a point above Khiva, where it is

* Burnes probably calculated by weight. I have reckoned silt at a specific gravity of 2,000.

described as being narrowed to about 100 yards, and as being proportionately deep and rapid. It is navigated from its estuary to Bokhara and Bulkh, but during five months is frozen so firmly, that the caravans pass over the ice in security. The breaking up of the ice in the beginning of March, is heard to a long distance. The researches of Captain Wood, have proved, that the source of this river is a small lake, which he has named Victoria.

LAKE LOWDAHN.—Part of the waters of the Aumoo are disembogued into a small lake South-West of the Sea of Aral, and called Lowdahn.

RIVER MOORGHAUB, OR AWB I MOWR.—The river Moorghaub or Awb i Mowr (water of Merv) rises in the mountains of Ghor, and originally joined the Aumoo in the sandy desert of Kara Koom, after having fertilized the valleys of Punj Deeh and Yoollataun, and the sandy, but productive plain of Merv. But canals and drains seem to have been early constructed, for the diffusion of its waters: so that, during the last two or three thousand years, it has never advanced farther than the plain of Merv, being there entirely consumed in irrigation. The stream of this river is deep and rapid; its breadth at Yoollataun about fifty yards. At Punj Deeh, it receives the waters of the Khooshk rivulet, when the latter is not consumed in irrigation. It then flows through a clay valley, bounded on either side by sandy heights, and gradually opening into the plain of Merv. This valley was once cultivated, but is at present abandoned.

RIVER YEM, DJEM, OR EMBAH. — The Yem, Djem, or Embah, is a small river, whose waters are tainted by the saline productions of the sands, through which it flows. One of the streams near its source is tolerably pure, but even the bitter waters are drunk by the camels. I could not learn how high this river is navigable, but believe that boats of any burthen could be towed but a few miles up the stream.

RIVER IRGHIZ.—Of the rivulet Irghiz, forming with the Yem the northern limits of Khaurism, I could learn little or nothing. Neither of these streams contributes much to the fertility of the land, and the waters of the Irghiz are probably as bitter as those of the Yem. The Irghiz is lost in a small salt lake, in the desert between Kokaun and Khaurism.

The seas and lakes form the most prominent features of Khaurism. The mountains are few: I saw only that chain of sandstone which severs the isthmus of Bucadri, Ig-dur

(I name these after Arrowsmith's Map of 1st January, 1841) from the Main Steppe. In that map they are called the Smoking Mountains. They appeared to me to be a triple ridge of sandstone, having a course North-East, and about 1,500 feet high. Of their composition, I judged by the debris at their feet, some enormous cubes of which had been worn by the weather into spheres. I did not see them emit smoke, nor hear of this phenomenon. I also saw the peak of a hill or mountain, apparently on the right bank of the Oxus; and was told that formerly it yielded gold. I could not approach it to judge of its height or formation.

Moravief saw mountains at the Bay of Bulkaun. And of these I learned from Toorcumuns, that they produce the wild goat. He does not give their height, but states that one of the deserted channels of the ancient Oxus separates the greater from the less Bulkaun; the other river channel lying further south; both channels entering the Bay of Bulkaun. In this case, the range must be of small extent: nor does that which he details give an impression of any considerable altitude, for on surmounting the rocky margin of the Bay, he sees the Steppe of Khiva extended before him. He mentions lead and sulphur as the products derived from the mountains of Khaurism.

POPULATION.—The original population of Khaurism would seem to have been the Toorcumun and Kuzzauk tribes, whose descendants still form the bulk of the inhabitants. These were in subjection to a race of Persians (at present called Sart), who dwelt in the cultivated regions, when the kingdom of Persia extended to the Oxus. These have in turn yielded to the Oozbegs, the present Lords of the soil. The following is a Table of the numbers of the several races at present owing allegiance to the Khaun Huzurut (or Supreme Lord) of Khiva:—

	Families.	No. of Persons.
Oozbegs	100,000	500,000
Kara Kulpauks	40,000	200,000
Kulmauks	6,000	30,000
Sarts	20,000	100,000
Toorcumuns	91,700	458,500
Kuzzauks	100,000	500,000
Total	357,700	1,788,500

The following is a more particular enumeration:—

TOORCUMUNS.

	Families.	No. of Persons.
Yahmoot	12,000	60,000
Tukka	40,000	200,000
Chowdhoor	12,000	60,000
Salore	6,000	30,000
Gogelaun	8,000	40,000
Saroke	9,000	45,000
Yumraulie	2,000	10,000
Aulylie	1,000	5,000
Kara Daughlie	1,000	5,000
Ersarie	700	3,500
Total families of Toorcumuns	91,700	458,500

OOZBEGS.

Oozbeg	100,000	500,000
Do. Kara Kulpauk	40,000	200,000
	140,000	700,000
Kuzzauks	100,000	500,000
But there are in Khaurism, of slaves about		700,000
Of Koozulbaush, or Persian tribes, say		20,000
And it is probable that the Sarts and others may amount to		90,000
This would give a population to the state of Khaurism, of souls		2,468,500

which is probably near the truth.

This amount, distributed over 450,000 square miles, gives an allowance of about five-and-a-half persons to a square mile.

The Oozbegs, Kara Kulpauks, and Kulmauks derive their origin from tribes bordering upon China. The Toorcumuns and Kuzzauks are evidently of the race which peoples a large portion of Russia, and of some other countries of Europe. They themselves deduce their descent from two brothers, the one, father of the Kuzzauks, the other of the Toorcumuns, who many thousand years ago, emigrated hither from the Don and Volga. The Kuzzauks are manifestly the Skuthoi, or Scythians, of Greek history. The Toorcumuns appear to be the Parthoi or Parthians; but it is difficult to assign any reason for these names, of which no vestige now remains amongst the people who bore them.

A small Toorcumun tribe, called Ata, dwelling on high sandy land between Khiva and the Bulkaun, is mentioned by Moravief, but as I did not hear of this tribe, I have not recorded its existence.

The native vegetable products of Khaurism are very few in number. Wormwood and the camel thorn everywhere cover the steppe, whether the soil be sand or clay. Two or three varieties of shrub flourish in the sandy wastes. Of one of these, the stem grows to the thickness of a man's thigh, yet is so brittle as to be easily torn up by the root, and so dry as to kindle readily on the application of fire. The course of the river is marked by the presence of the tamarisk and sometimes by that of the willow: but although the poplar is very abundant in plantations, I am not sure that it is a native of the soil; and I believe that the fruit trees are all exotic. Turf is nowhere known. Grass grows in scattered tufts upon the sandy surface, but seldom in sufficient quantity to be collected. The food of all graminivorous animals, from the camel to the sheep, is the wormwood and camel thorn.

In animal life Khaurism is much richer. The horse, indeed, can scarcely have been a native of pastures, so unsuited to his habits; and the breed possessed by the Toorcumuns is probably derived from Kokaun and Eastern Tartary; whilst that of the Kuzzauk may be from the Don and Volga. The more undoubted natives of the soil are the double-humped camel and the dromedary. The wild ass, and a small animal intermediate between the sheep and the antelope. The wild goat and wild sheep. The fox and wolf. The lion, tiger, leopard, and bear. The jerboa, and a larger animal of the same species. The wild hog and hare. The pheasant, partridge, and chuccore, or red-legged partridge. The quail, woodcock, and snipe. The wild swan, wild goose, duck, and fowl. The raven, crow, and magpie; of the latter, large flocks haunt the wells of the sandy desert. The plover, lark, and kingfisher.

But although the horse may not be a native of the soil, the Toorcumun horse is held in such high esteem by all the nations of Asia, that some account of the several breeds may be acceptable. The Tukka and Yahmoot tribes are those, which possess the most celebrated horses. Next to these, are the Goklaun and Chowdoor tribes. The Oozbegs also have a celebrated breed, but I believe there are few of these reared in Khaurism; the best Oozbeg breed is at Shire-i-subz, in Bokhara.

The Tukka horse is of large stature, has a high and finely arched crest, and is the handsomest and most generally esteemed of all the Toorcumun breed. But he is said to be deficient in sinew, and in this respect very inferior to the Yahmoot horse. The loss of some of my notes at the time of my captivity, prevents me from detailing the names of the several breeds belonging to the Tukka and Yahmoot Toorcumuns.

YAHMOOT HORSE.—The Yahmoot horse averages perhaps about 15 hands in height, is generally well formed, and remarkable for the strength of his sinews. These are very widely separated from the bone, and sometimes to a degree which although it adds to the power, detracts from the symmetry of the limb. His head shews much blood. He is tractable and gentle, but full of fire. His powers of endurance are very great, and he will eat the driest and most unpalatable fodder, and thrive upon the wormwood of the desert. At sight of a mare or even of a gelding, Toorcumun horses become frantic. They rise upon their hind legs, and spring upon one another with a degree of fury that can be imagined only after having been once witnessed; at other times they are perfectly gentle, and being accustomed to be ridden in compact bodies very rarely kick or bite one another. They are ridden upon a single snaffle, and are of course somewhat unmanageable at speed. Mares are never ridden by Oozbegs or Toorcumuns; it is considered unseemly to ride a mare. In camp, they are tied by the pastern to a peg of iron, driven into the earth, and are fed upon barley, or jowarr and chaff. On journeys they get about ten lbs. each of barley, or eight of jowarr, and whatever fodder (it is generally very scanty) the desert may supply. They will march sixty to eighty miles a day upon this food for many days, carrying water and grain for themselves and their master, and the clothing of both. I have seen Yahmoot horses quite equal to our best blood hunters in figure and limb, and much handsomer, being never gelt nor cropped. In winter, the Toorcumun horse is swaddled in three thick felts of sheep's and goat's wool, which are impervious to wind and rain; and is left out in the open air day and night. At night the snow is piled around him, as a farther protection. In so dry a climate, this is far better for him, than the confined air of a stable; and he preserves the sleekness of his skin, throughout the winter.

The Toorcumun horse might, with advantage, be introduced into our Indian stud. His great height and strength would improve the Indian breed, and he is by no means defi-

cient in blood. So long as our friendly relations with Khiva continue, there can be no difficulty in procuring a sufficient number for this purpose. A tribe of Yahmoots dwells at Punj Deeh, on the borders of Heraut; and to that station resort all the Toorcumuns, who carry horses to exchange for slaves with the Jumsheedies and other tented tribes, dependent upon Heraut. At Punj Deeh, large numbers might be purchased, were any British agent always there; but so long as Yar Muhummud Khaun continues in power at Heraut, no Toorcumun will venture to pass the country of the Jumsheedies. Much jealousy must be anticipated from this tribe at any interference with their monopoly of Toorcumun horses: but they are a cowardly race, easily awed into subjection.

PRICE.—The price of a first-rate Yahmoot horse is about 80 Tillas of Khiva, or 520 Co.'s Rs. or 52*l.* sterling. The price would, of course, rise with the demand. If, therefore, it be reckoned at 100*l.* the expense of conveying the horse to our nearest stud would perhaps amount to 30*l.* more, making a total of 130*l.* The risk is, with proper precautions, trifling. The best Yahmoot and Tukka horses are sold at a market about twelve miles from Khiva.

TUJKUN BREED.—There is a peculiar breed called Tujkun, which from its description, I should suppose worthy of particular attention. It is bred in Cashgar, whence it is occasionally brought to Bokhara. It is said to be small of stature, but very elegantly formed, and full of courage and fire. It has large projecting eyes, and remarkably fine limbs. I could not, whilst at Khiva, procure a specimen. I was informed by several natives, who affected to have seen it, that some years ago a horse was kept at Charrjoee in Bokhara, for which an enormous sum had been paid, having upon its head two small and slightly curved horns. It was regarded with great reverence by the Oozbegs.

KUZZAUK GALLOWAY.—The Kuzzauk horse is a robust galloway, of the powers of which it is difficult to judge, as it receives no food, but the wormwood of the steppe. It is, however, very hardy, being turned loose to graze throughout the year, without any clothing, beside its own, long and shaggy hair. In the district of Mungh Kishlauk, the herds of Kuzzauk galloways are not to be numbered. They are kept for the sake of their milk, and their flesh; mare's milk, half fermented, being a favourite beverage of all the natives of Toorkestaun; and the flesh of the horse being regarded as a delicacy. The Kuzzauk galloway is also in request through-

out the cultivated tract of Khiva, as a draught horse for the two-wheeled carts, with which every house is furnished; but in the desert, wheeled carriages are unknown; and it is remarkable, that they have not yet found their way into Persia or Afghaunistaun.

KUZZAUK CAMEL AND DROMEDARY OF KHAURISM.—The camel of the Kuzzauk is the real, or two-humped camel. It is, however, of far more delicate make than that of Arabia, and preferred, for the saddle to the dromedary. It is the smallest of Asiatic camels: long in the back, very fine limbed, and covered with hair, upwards of a foot in length. The throat is supplied with a dense mane, about a foot and a half long, which gives it a very singular appearance. It is a gentle and docile creature, better fitted for draught than the dromedary, owing to the greater length of its back: but as a beast of burthen it is inferior in strength to the dromedary of Khiva and Bokhara, which is the finest I have anywhere seen.

The dromedary of Khiva, reared by the Toorcûmuns and Oozbegs, is a very noble creature.

Its strength is greater than that of the Indian dromedary, and this appearance of power is increased by huge tufts of curled hair, which grow upon the muscles of the legs, and cover the neck. The intermediate breed is more powerful than either, and has generally, I believe, two humps. The dromedary will carry a burden of 600 lbs., at the rate of 30 miles a day, for almost any distance; provided that it be supplied with a sufficiency of the oil-cake, upon which alone it is fed; grain being considered too expensive. It walks under a burthen about two and one-third miles an hour.

Oxen are confined to the cultivated districts, and those bordering the sea of Aral. They are few, and deserve no particular mention. They are used in the plough.

WILD ASS.—The wild ass wanders in herds of two or three hundred throughout the steppe, intermediate between Khiva and the Caspian. He is not the animal described in Scripture; but a much tamer creature; differing, indeed, very little in appearance from the tame variety. Those which dwell alone amongst the mountains, are fleet and wild; but when found in herds, the wild ass exhibits little speed, and when pressed, stops and bites or kicks at the rider's horse. The flesh is eaten by Tarters and Persians, and was the favourite food of the Persian hero, Roostum. I found the desert absolutely manured with the dung of these animals, and trampled by their hoofs. They feed upon the wormwood.

ANTELOPE.—There is a species of antelope in these deserts almost as numerous as the wild ass. It is smaller than a sheep, which it resembles in body, neck, and head; having the delicate limbs, the hair and horns of the antelope. The horn, however, is not opaque but white, and like a white cow's horn; the nostrils are directly in front, and closed by a muscle acting vertically. The nose is greatly arched, and provided with a loose integument, which can be inflated at pleasure. The head is extremely ugly. This animal, which I have never seen elsewhere, is called by the natives Kaigh.

WILD SHEEP AND GOAT.—The wild sheep is said to be found in the mountains of the Balkaun, and not to differ from that of Afghaunistaun, which I have seen and hunted. It is a noble and beautiful creature, resembling the antelope in the form of its body and limbs, and even in the texture and colour of its fur. Its tail is unlike that of the sheep, and similar to that of the deer species. It is only in the head and horns that the sheep is recognised. It carries the head very high like a goat. The male has a profuse beard of white, extending from the chin to the chest, and upwards of a foot in length. The horns are like those of the tame sheep. It frequents craggy mountains, where it pastures in flocks always furnished with sentinels, and its vigilance is such that it is approached with the utmost difficulty. It does not, however, haunt the highest and most precipitous peaks. These pasture the wild goat, an animal differing from the wild sheep, only in having a larger horn, shaped like that of the tame goat. The flesh of these animals is equal to the finest venison. The other animals of Khaurism are too well known to require particular notice.

The domesticated sheep of Khaurism deserves some brief mention. It is as high as the English variety, but has smaller limbs and carcass. The tail is of great size, being a cleft sack of the most delicate fat, extending as far as the knees, and often weighing 12 or 14 pounds. This fat resembles marrow in texture and taste, and takes the place of oil and butter in the domestic economy of the Kuzzauk. This sheep is found in all climates of central Asia, and might be easily introduced into England, where its fat would be very valuable.

CULTIVATED TRACTS.—It has already been stated that the wastes of Khaurism give place, in only two instances, to the products of human industry.

The most important of these is the tract in which Khiva, the capital, is situated; and which is a low clay plain, inter-

sected on the east by the waters of the Oxus, and touching on the west, the skirt of a sandy desert. This plain, at present, extends only from Huzzarusp, about forty miles south of Khiva, to the sea of Aral. But its course, in the days of Alexander, was nearly four times as long, skirted the Oxus throughout the whole of its course from Khiva to the Caspian. Its present length may be estimated at 200 British miles. Its average breadth at sixty. Giving an area of 12,000 square miles, which is in general profusely watered by canals from the Oxus, and richly cultivated. Even here, however, there is room for improvement, and every year brings into subjection to the plough some fresh portion of so productive a soil. The life of the Tartar shepherd has, indeed, many charms for a race who have been bred up in the midst of the desert; and its idleness seems to unfit them for the labour requisite to extort the treasures of the soil. But the change from the privations of the steppe to the luxuries of the enclosed plain; from a diet of sour curds and a robe of sheepskin, to the enjoyment of bread, rice, vegetables, the most delicious of fruit, and a raiment from the looms of India and Europe, are temptations which gradually assert their sway over even the indolence of the Nomadic tribes; and as slaves form the principal wealth of these people, their own labours are long confined to the mere oversight of their establishments. Nothing, indeed, can be imagined in stronger contrast, than the nakedness of the steppe, and the riches of the cultivated lands.

Fertility of the cultivated Tract.—The suspension of the powers of nature by about five months of severe frost, seems to preserve and concentrate her strength for the season, when it may be exerted in the production of fruit and vegetable. Wheat, jowarr, and rice, are yielded in the greatest abundance. The melon of Khiva is perhaps the finest in the world, and the grape scarcely yields even to that of Cundahar and Heraut. Other fruits are the apple, pear, peach, apricot, and plum; and the limitation is rather owing to the state of horticulture at Khiva than to any incapacity of the soil or climate.

The plain of Khiva is intersected by numerous canals, and divided into estates and gardens by low, neatly constructed, walls of clay. It is well wooded, and as the houses of the gentry are all constructed somewhat in imitation of castles, the effect is picturesque. During the summer and spring the canals afford wholesome water; but in the winter, these are dammed up, and the town is ill supplied from wells and ponds.

KHIVA, THE CAPITAL.—Khiva, the present capital of Khaurism, is a town about half a mile square, defended by a high mound surmounted by a wall and bastions of clay, above which a large column is visible. It contains no monument of interest; being filled with miserable mud houses, and intersected by narrow lanes. The castle of masonry contains the state apartments of the king. But when I have mentioned that glass and chimneys are things unknown at Khiva, some idea may be formed of a regal palace there; but certainly none that will do full justice to the meanness and wretchedness of the dwelling. It is for this reason that the Khaun Huzurut still prefers sitting in his black tent; an example followed by many of the Oozbegs and Toorcumuns.

SUBURBS.—Small as is this capital city of Khaurism, the suburbs are extensive, and the villages and the gentlemen's estates form a closely connected series over the whole of the culturable land.

OORGUNJ.—Oorgunj, formerly the capital, is still the town next in consequence to Khiva, which it exceeds in size and in traffic; being situated upon the western bank of the Oxus, and visited by the Bokhara caravans, in their passage to Khiva and Mung Kishlauk, and by those from Kokaun bound for Khiva.

HUZZARUSP.—Huzzarusp is next to this in importance, being the residence of the Inauk, or king's brother, the second person in dignity of this kingdom. It is also situated upon the Oxus, but near the southern limit of the cultivated land.

GHONGHRAUT.—Ghonghraut is perhaps the next in consequence after Huzzarusp. It is situated near the embouchure of the Oxus, and inhabited by a race of Oozbegs termed Kara Kulpauk. Of this town, I could learn only particulars relative to the unchastity of the females, who still retain the following remarkable custom:—When a traveller enters the city, unmarried girls meet and challenge him to wrestle. The vanquished is obliged to submit to the pleasure of the conqueror. The gross licence of the Kara Kulpauk women is proverbial, and commences in early childhood.

These are the principal towns of this highly cultivated plain. The province of Merv may be described in few words.

PROVINCE OF MERV OR MOWR.—It is a plain about sixty miles in length by forty in breadth, of the finest sand, presenting an aspect more dreary than that of the desert itself; for not a leaf is seen throughout its extent, and the soil is too

unstable to produce even a weed or a blade of grass. Nevertheless, the considerable body of water poured down by the Moorghaub, and entirely consumed in irrigation, gives fertility to the fields; and the poorer kinds of grain, as jowarr and barley, are produced in great abundance. The melon also is particularly fine, and ere the ancient city was deserted, grapes and other fruits were not unknown. But the troubles of the last sixty years caused neglect of the dam of the Moorghaub, upon which depended the very existence of this desert Oasis; and Merv was for some time utterly abandoned; nor have the fostering measures pursued by the present governor restored one inhabitant to the city, although the plain is cultivated by Toorcumuns dwelling in tents.

MERV.—Merv, however, is too important a site to be long neglected, being the granary of a large portion of the hill country of Heraut, and the channel of commerce between that city and Khiva, and between Bokhara, Heraut, and Meshed.

The government of Merv is one of the most considerable offices of the state. Its seat is a small mud castle upon the western back of the Moorghaub, at the point of the dispersion of the waters of that river, through the five principal canals. A few miserable huts form a bazaar, resorted to from very distant parts, and the most considerable mart in a circuit of several hundred miles. There are said to be about 60,000 families dwelling upon this plain, and the revenue in taxes and customs is reckoned at 30,000 Tillas, or about 200,000 Co's. Rupees.

YOOLLATAUN.—Yoollataun is a continuation of the plain of Merv, southward. It enjoys the waters of the Moorghaub, is tilled by Nomadic Toorcumuns, and yields a revenue of about 1,000 Tillas, or 7,000 Co's. Rupees.

PUNJ DEEH.—Punj Deeh, a valley on the Moorghaub, once highly cultivated, is now almost abandoned. Its revenue about six years ago was 500 Tillas, or about 3,500 Co's. Rupees.

EXISTING MONUMENTS.—The existing monuments of the former empire of Toorkestaun are few, poor, and neglected. Even the tomb of the hero, Ulp Urslaun, in Merv, is almost forgotten, although a rallying point for memory, and an oft-quoted example of the instability of human grandeur, amongst the Persians, whom he subdued.*

* Upon the tomb of this hero and conqueror were inscribed the following words: "All ye who have seen the glory of Ulp Urslaun exalted to the heavens, come to Merv, and you will behold it buried in the dust."

I found a lofty brick column of inelegant construction at old Oorgunj. It is said to have been built by Chenghiz Khaun. Amongst the ruins of that ancient capital, I found interest in tracing the pyramidal roofs of the palaces of the Mogul dynasty at Maandoo, the former capital of Malwa; which I had again met with on the tombs of some of the family of Timoorlung at Bukka, and afterwards on the tower of the Kremlin, and Kityegorod, at Moscow; thus forming a connected chain extending upwards of 3,500 miles, and yet not comprising the full extent, north and south, of the conquests of that Shepherd race, whose architecture savours of their Chinese origin.

I could hear of no other monuments worthy of mention.

Customs and Manners.—Of the customs and manners of this nation it is not easy for me to speak satisfactorily; for during my residence at Khiva, although treated with much outward ceremony, I was, as has been seen, a close prisoner. Something, however, I saw, and something more was learned by enquiry.

The Oozbeg.—Oozbeg Costume.—The Oozbeg, the present lord of the kingdom, averages about five feet seven inches in height, and is stout and heavy of make. His countenance is broad and ruddy. His eyes are long, and not well opened. His complexion is almost as fair as that of Europe. He has little or no beard. The women are described by Asiatics as very beautiful. But I suspect this beauty consists of a complexion unusually fair and a rosy and delicate brow. The female figure must, I suppose, be always heavy, or at least rendered so by the costume of the country. The male attire is a shirt of cotton, loose drawers of woollen cloth, and a succession of from two to six cloaks, generally of striped silk, or cotton chintz, wadded with raw cotton; but amongst the nobility, of broad cloth (of which dark green is preferred), lined with fur and edged with the same. The head-dress of all males, excepting the priests, who wear turbans, is a cylindric cap of black lambskin, large in proportion to the rank of the wearer.

The female attire differs from that of the male only in the the head-dress, which is a white or colored kerchief rolled up like a robe, and wound around the head in a high cylindric form. The end of this is often opened, and brought around the throat, which their notions of decency oblige them to conceal.

Tartar Costume.—The Toorcumun cap is slightly conical. Sometimes it is a close skull cap of black lambskin. In other respects he adops the Oozbeg attire.

THE TOORCUMUN.—His height averages about five feet and seven inches; but he is less heavily framed than the Oozbeg, and with a countenance sometimes dark and sometimes florid, has almost always irregular features, and small, round, lively black eyes. The women, being less exposed, is fairer than her lord, whose counterpart in form and feature she is. I have seen many pretty Toorcumun women, but a beauty must be a rarity. The style of countenance is decidedly European.

THE KUZZAUK.—The Kuzzauk is more robust than the Toorcumun, and of more clumsy build. His complexion is fairer, his cheek bones are higher, his features are more irregular. His eyes are small, and ill-opened, and generally placed at a slight angle.

He is almost ignorant of the use of linen, and can seldom command the luxury of civilized attire. Instead of the woven cloak, therefore, he draws around him a mantle of half-tanned sheep's or young camel skin, dressed with the wool inside, or a similar cloak of the spoils of the horse, with the hair outside; and his head is covered with a bonnet of the same material. The Kuzzauk woman is fairer and redder than her lord. She always appears as if her ears had just been boxed; and excepting perhaps the negress, is the ugliest female under the sun. She is robust, and does all the laborious duties of the shepherd's life.

THE KULMAUK.—The Kulmauks are too few to require distinct notice, and the Sarts differ in no respect, excepting attire, from other inhabitants of Persia. The Oozbeg is first in consequence. After him the Toorcumun, and last of all, the persecuted Kuzzauk.

WEALTH OF THE OOZBEG.—The wealth of the Oozbeg consists in land and in slaves. He has often several hundreds of these unhappy drudges, whom he can afford to purchase from the Toorcumun, being proprietor of the richest tracts of the soil. He is a hard master, and, as a man, one of the most degraded of God's creatures; living a life of sullen and joyous apathy, chequered only by debauches of the grossest character, and indulgences too brutal to be named. When sufficiently wealthy to commit his domestic affairs to the hand of a steward, he sits in his house from day to day, without occupation, slumbering life away. His wife has the keeping of his purse, and, being utterly neglected by her brutal lord, amuses herself at his expense, and frequently without even the decency of concealment. As every house has one or two small carts drawn by the Kuzzauk galloway, she mounts such as often as she feels inclined, and takes a

jaunt into the wilderness, with the male slave whom she favours. This species of debauchery is the only hope held out to the unhappy slave of obtaining his liberty—for if he can establish himself in her good graces, he is enriched by her liberality, and, after fifteen or sixteen years, is able to purchase his discharge.

Field Sports.—The only decent amusement of the Oozbeg is hawking, for which the country is well adapted, being open, and upon the banks of rivers full of hares, pheasants, and the red-legged partridge. He is well mounted, and has never occasion for a good seat, in a country so level, and upon a horse untrained to leap.

Horse Trappings.—He rides upon a smooth snaffle, and of course cannot control his steed, which is generally a Toorcumun of the Tukka or Yahmoot breed, the two finest in the land. His wealth or dignity are guessed by the trappings of his horse, which are always beautiful, and often costly, having scales of pure silver inlaid with gold, covering the harness, and hanging in thongs from the neck. The stirrups, which are large, are also richly inlaid with gold. Turquoise and cornelians, and even rubies, are often set in the harness; but the latter are always uncut, and seldom of great price. It is remarkable, that horse harness is never stolen by servants.

Arms.—The arms of the Oozbeg are the sabre, the matchlock and the dagger. The pistol is too rare to be commonly used, and the country affords no wood fit for spearshafts, although this weapon is much in request, and occasionally obtained from the Kuzzauk, who in turn receives it from his Russian brethren. The sabre, used by men of rank, is the Isfahaunce or Khorussaunie blade; and the rifled matchlock is manufactured in Heraut or in Persia. There is a fabric of sabres and daggers at Khiva, but they are of very inferior quality, and no present is so acceptable to the nobility of Khiva as foreign sabres, pistols, and rifles, provided that the blades are of delicate water, and the fire-arms not upon the detonating principle.

Value of the Oozbeg as a Soldier.—From the habits of the Oozbeg, above described, it may be concluded that he is a despicable horse soldier; and I need only add, that foot soldiers are unknown in the land. He is, indeed, a very different creature from his robust and hardy ancestor, who, under Chenghis Khaun, rode down the armies of the East, and subdued a quarter of the globe. Whilst other nations have been tempering their strength by civilization, and increasing their wealth and power by commerce, he has been

every year losing sight of the simple but hardy manners of his fathers, and receding upon the scale of virtue, in proportion to his neighbours' advance. Surrounded by deserts infested by those of whom he purchases human flesh—a race of men more formidable by their rapacity and inhumanity than the wild beasts of the forests,—the wilds which have hitherto secured his independence, have debarred the passage of a ray of knowledge from the civilized world. Thus, the improvement which science has introduced into modern warfare are regarded as the effect of necromancy, and the innovators are held in superstitious terror.

Toorcumun Habits—Slave Traffic.—The life of the Toorcumun is more active than that of the Oozbeg, for he generally lives in a camp in the wilderness, where luxuries are unknown, and there are more inducements to enterprize. Every third day, his tent is struck by the women, by them packed upon his camels, and carried to a fresh spot, where the pasture has not been browsed. The desert abounds in a small animal called Kaigh, holding an immediate link between the sheep and the antelope; and, as he is generally decently mounted and provided with deer hounds, he is much addicted to the chase. At other times he besets the track pursued by caravans, plunders the goods, and enslaves the merchants, whom he sells at the Merv or Khiva market. When such merchant happens to be a Soonnie, or orthodox Muhummedan, as is generally the case, he beats or tortures him until he declares himself, in the presence of witnesses, a Sheeah, or Persian heretic; for the Muhummedan law very strictly forbids the enthralment of a Moosulman, and amongst Muhummedans, as among Christians, it is more damnable to differ in opinion with a brother than to be ignorant of the rule by which he regulates his conduct, and justifies or condemns the world. The number of slaves thus captured almost exceeds belief. At Khiva, there are not less than 12,000 of the subjects of Heraut, and probably 30,000 Persians. The total number of slaves at Khiva is estimated at 700,000. The Toorcumun is even more cruel to his slaves than the Oozbeg. He scruples not to sell the women, whom he has reason to suppose with child by himself, and he has no pity upon either male or female of those whom he retains as beasts of burthen. As he is not addicted to the brutal vice of the Oozbeg, there is no hope of liberty, short of death, to the slave in his service. A considerable number of the Toorcumuns have been induced to cultivate the soil. At Merv, about 60,000 are thus employed, and in the plain of Khiva there are probably as many. These,

however, generally retain something of their old unsettled habits, dwelling in tents, and frequently possessing flocks and herds, which they send for pasture into the wilderness, following them thither, at seasons when agriculture is at rest.

Habits of the Kuzzauk.—The Kuzzauk is the rudest of the people of Khaurism. He is free from the degrading habits and indulgences of the Oozbeg, and is less tempted to the predatory pursuits of the Toorcumun. He is indeed nearly in a state of nature, a condition preferable to anything short of complete civilization. He moves, like the Toorcumun, from pasture to pasture, leaving, like him, all the onerous duties of existence to the female. His children tend his camels, horses; and sheep; and he himself chases the fox, the antelope, and wild ass of the desert, or wanders from tent to tent, whiling away the time in conversation. As he inhabits a country exposed to great extremes of heat and cold, being for four months in the year covered with snow, and during an equal period burnt up with the rays of a blazing sun; he is obliged to suit his residence to the season, and is driven to expedients unknown to his brethren the Toorcumuns. In the summer he migrates to the valleys of the higher lands, where are wells scattered at long intervals, and known to all the wandering tribes. As the winter approaches he descends to more sheltered spots, still guided by the position of wells; for neither river nor stream is known in the land. When the winter has set in, he is no longer fettered by such local considerations, for the snow furnishes him with an abundant supply of water; but, as the snow completely hides the pasture, it is necessary to migrate to the lowest lands, unless the fodder be such as will admit of stacking for the winter. Hitherto, he has lived almost solely upon the milk of his camels, mares, and sheep, which he eats in the form of curds, without bread or vegetable, knowing only at long intervals the luxury of flesh. But, as the winter pasture can furnish but a scanty supply of milk, he kills, at the commencement of winter, all his old camels, horses, and sheep, and salts them as a winter store. These are eaten without any accompaniment of bread or vegetable, and he knows but a single method of dressing the flesh, viz. that of boiling.

In the spring of the year he pastures his flocks and herds in the neighbourhood of the chalk cliffs which appear to stretch south from Nuov Alexandrof to the latitude of Khiva, and which preserve for several months beneath their brows a treasury of snow.

Kuzzauk Manners.—His manners are rude and unpolished,

but he is hospitable and kind-hearted, honest, and untainted by the vices of his neighbours.

The few slaves possessed by the Kuzzauk are more gently and generously treated than those who serve the Oozbeg and Toorcumun. He is more wealthy than the latter; but being remote from the seat of government, is subject to the depredations of the Toorcumuns, who dwell between him and Khiva. His wealth, I need scarcely say, consists wholly of flocks and herds, and nearly all articles of furniture and comfort, several of which (as carpets, felts, tents, and horse-trappings), the Toorcumun himself manufactures; he purchases, or rather receives in exchange, for camels, galloways, and sheep. All domestic utensils, however, as cast-iron caldrons, pots and pans, knives, wooden bowls, platters, and spoons, are received from Russia; which supplies also with such articles the whole of Toorkestaun or Tartary.

The Kuzzauk as a Soldier.—The Kuzzauk has few weapons at command. His country yields them not, and his habits of life scarcely render them necessary. He is obliged to furnish his quota of armed horsemen for the service of the state, and these are mounted upon the sturdy galloway peculiar to this people, and wretchedly armed with a few long spears, sabres, and even matchlocks. His horse being fed solely upon the wretched pasture of the country, and always gelt, is incapable of the fatigue which the Toorcumun horse will endure, but is less incommoded by exposure to the inclemency of the weather. The Kuzzauk is more superstitiously fearful of fire-arms than even the Toorcumun. He professes the Muhummedan religion, and to be a Soonnie; but although there be Kuzzauk Moollas, so styled, he is profoundly ignorant of the faith he professes, and very rarely goes through the ceremony of worship.

Learning of Khiva.—The learning of Khiva is scarcely worthy of the name, and confined solely to the priesthood, who learn to read a little Arabic and Toorkish, which is written in the Arabic character. So utter is the want of curiosity respecting passing events, that the existence of the English was unknown previous to the late siege of Heraut; although there is constant communication between Khiva and Persia.

Arts and Manufactures.—There are few arts and manufactures known in Khaurism. Of these the most important is undoubtedly the fabric of felts and carpets by the Toorcumun, supplying the whole kingdom with these essentials of

eastern comfort, and contributing a small quota to the trade with Russia. The felts (nummud) are perhaps inferior to those of Ghayn, and the carpets cannot be compared with the fabric of Heraut or of Persia. The cutlery of Khiva is of extremely inferior quality, and consists of a small number of swords and daggers. The sheaths of these are of silver or gold, according to the military rank of the wearer, and are rather prettily embossed by the Khiva silversmith. These are the only manufactures of Khiva.

COMMERCE OF KHIVA.—The commerce of Khiva is inconsiderable, and yet of extreme importance to a kingdom so unprovided with manufactures of its own, into which a taste for the conveniences of life is creeping. At the commencement of the reign of the late king, usually called Madreheem Khaun, the state was at peace with Russia, and the Khiva caravans traded direct with Orenburg: but since the friendly relations between Russia and Khiva have been interrupted, the traffic is transacted entirely through the means of Bokhara, to the great advantage of the latter state and detriment to Khiva. The articles of merchandise brought from Orenburgh and Astrakhan by the Bokhara caravans are broadcloth, chintz, cotton cloths, furs, leather, fine loaf-sugar, cast-iron cooking utensils, bars of wrought iron, China-ware, etc., in return for which Russia has almost nothing to offer but hard cash and coin, Bokhara supplying the dried fruits required in Russia.

With Bokhara Khiva has little interchange of native commodities, although the latter state receives nearly all her foreign supplies from the Bokhara caravans. The lambskins of Bokhara are indeed finer than the native produce of Khiva, and Khiva sometimes serves as a granary to Bokhara.

From Heraut Khiva receives tobacco, a few silks and shawls, a little tea, and a few rifled matchlocks, and Persian sabres and daggers; and returns coin, lambskins, Toorcumun horses dromedaries, and camels.

From Persia are brought arms, silks, loaf-sugar, turquoises, a few Persian shawls, and tobacco. And the return is in grain, lambskins, and Toorcumun horses.

Notwithstanding the hostile feelings that for some years past have prevented open traffic between Russia and Khiva, a good deal of secret intercourse has been maintained between the Russian merchants and the Kuzzauks and Toorcumuns in the province of Mungh Kishlauk: these wild tribes being dependent upon Russia for articles which they regard as

luxuries, but which we deem necessaries, viz., bread, sugar, cooking utensils, knives, wooden bowls, platters, and spoons, for which they barter their flocks and herds.

REVENUE of KHAURISM.—The revenue of Khaurism is of three kinds—a house-tax, a property-tax, and a tax upon merchandize. The Oozbegs pay according to their wealth, from half a tilla to three tillas per annum; i. e., from six to thirty-six shillings for each house.

The Toorcumuns and Kuzzauks pay one in forty of all live stock.

The duties are levied upon imported slaves, and slaves purchasing freedom. On imported and exported wheat, tobacco, etc., at so much the camel-load; and upon other exported and imported merchandize according to its value.

I was under such strong suspicion during my brief residence at Khiva, that I deemed it imprudent to make inquiries relative to the wealth of a country which Christians were supposed to covet, and which was at the moment invaded by a Christian nation; the following estimate cannot, therefore, be depended upon.

REVENUE.

	Tillas of Khiva.	Co.'s Rs.
From Punj Deeh, per annum	500	3,000
Yoollataun	1,000	6,000
Merv, including customs . . .	30,000	180,000
At the plain of Khiva,		
30,000 settled families at 3 tillas . . .	90,000	
30,000 ditto ditto 2 ditto . . .	60,000	
30,000 ditto ditto 1 ditto . . .	30,000	
10,000 ditto ditto ½ ditto . . .	5,000	
	185,000	=1,110,000
Toorcumun families, at the rate of 1 in 40 of all live stock, 100,000 families .	100,000	600,000
Kuzzauks, ditto, ditto, 100,000 . . .	120,000	720,000
Customs at Khiva and other places . .	40,000	240,000
		2,859,000

or about £285,900, or about seven times the revenue of the kingdom of Heraut.

It is, however, to be remembered, that nearly the whole of this sum is the personal property of the sovereign, as from it are paid none of the offices of the state; and that the police

and standing militia, if such they may be termed, are furnished free of expense to government by the settled inhabitants as well as by the Nomades.

The settled inhabitants of Khaurism are bound to furnish, for the use of government, to be ready at a moment's notice, one armed horseman of their own tribe, from every fifty chains of arable land. The Nomades, or tented inhabitants, furnish similar horsemen, at the rate of one horseman for every four families. These horsemen are not paid by government, unless levied for some military expedition, when each receives 5 Tillas or 30 Co's. Rupees, about £3, whatever the distance or duration of the enterprise. It may be supposed that a militia, thus constituted, must be deficient in all that can give efficiency and vigour to a military mass. That the horse, arms, and equipment of the soldier will ever be of the most inferior description; and that the soldier himself will have little skill in the use of his weapons and management of his horse, and be utterly unaccustomed to the discipline requisite to ensure order, and distinguish a body of horsemen from a flock of sheep.

It is equally certain, that the royal treasury, unaccustomed in times of peace to the burthen of a military tax, opens with reluctance whenever war threatens the land, and often too late to be of service to the state.

MILITARY FORCE OF KHAURISM.—The following is a rude estimate of the military force of Khaurism:—

Oozbegs	50,000	Horsemen.
Toorcumuns	25,000	
Koozulbaush, or Persian . . .	8,000	
Kuzzauks	25,000	
	108,000	

The above is far less than the general estimate, which is 350,000; but I am inclined to think that the latter amount is an error, arising from mistaking the number of families in Khaurism for the number of horsemen maintained by those families; and I am credibly informed that the largest muster has never exceeded 85,000.

Of these horsemen, the Oozbegs are accounted the best, and the Persians are really the élite. The Toorcumuns are next to the Oozbegs; and the Kuzzauks, accustomed to the tyranny of the Toorcumuns, mounted upon galloway geldings, ill-clad and half-armed, may indeed be useful as forayers and couriers, but deserve not to be reckoned in the ranks of

battle. Even the Oozbeg and Toorcumun horse, when they appear in the field, greatly disappoint the expectation which has dwelt upon the fame of Tartary for steeds. Some fine, and many large horses are to be seen in the ranks; but nearly two-thirds are undersized, and many are mere galloways, or animals remarkable for their ugliness and unserviceableness.

DESIGNS OF RUSSIA UPON KHIVA.—So early as the reign of the Czar Peter, the extreme importance of Khiva to Russia was understood; and an expedition, under the command of Prince Bekevitch, was despatched from Gorief, for the conquest of Khaurism. This force of 4,000 coasted the Caspian to the most eastern point of the Gulf of Mertvoi, and thence marched upon Khiva, easily overcoming all opposition. When near the capital, the Khaun Huzurut, who was then, I believe, a Kuzzauk, sent a polite embassy to the Russian General, assuring him of his friendship and submission, and inviting him to the royal palace with a small retinue. The infatuated general complied. And when in the power of the Khaun, was forced to write to his lieutenant, directing him to quarter the troops in the neighbouring villages.

Upon a repetition of this order, the local commander was obliged to comply. The troops were dispersed through the villages, and murdered during the night. Only two Cossaqs escaped, and bore the news to Russia. About this time was erected the fort of Krasnovedsk, at the mouth of the Gulf of Balkaun. It has long since been abandoned.

After this event, it would appear that some slight traffic was maintained between the two states, regulated by their mutual convenience. Russia, indeed, affirms that the Khaun Huzurut of Khiva entirely submitted to Russia, and that the sovereigns of that state held their dominions through her sufferance. This is clearly a mere boast; for it is not in the hour of complete triumph over a foe, that a barbarous state would be tamed by that foe to submission. Some kind of intercourse of Khiva with Orenburgh and Astrakhan, was however maintained, until the reign of the late king of Khaurism, Muhummud Ruheem Khaun, or Madreheem Khaun as he is usually called. He was a vigorous and warlike prince, and took from Bokhara several tracts of territory. It was toward the close of his reign, and during a period of hostility between Khiva and Bokhara, that a Russian detachment attempting to force its way to Bokhara through the territories of Khaurism, was opposed by the troops of Khiva; an event which led to

the late hostilities between the Russian and Khivan states.—*See* p. 108 *of Journal*, vol. i.

COURT OF KHIVA.—The court of Khiva is very simply constructed. The monarch himself transacts all important business, and gives special orders upon every important affair. His prime minister, the Mehtur, has little more than those subordinate details under his controul, which at European courts fall to the lot of under secretaries. The Khoosh Beegie, or Chief Falconer, who is the second officer of state, discharges alternately high military functions and the meanest of a civil character. The officers subordinate to these, have no voice in the councils, nor any authority in the affairs of the state. Even the priesthood, which in Muhummedan empires has usually so much influence, though here treated with marked respect, is not much consulted by the monarch.

CHARACTER OF THE REIGNING KHAUN.—Ulla Koolie Khaun, king of Khaurism, or Khaun Huzurut (i. e. Supreme Lord) of Khiva, is son of his predecessor, Muhummud Ruheem Khaún, and the third of the present, or Oozbeg dynasty; previous to which, the throne of Khaurism was held by Kuzzauk Khauns, with an Oozbeg aristocracy. The present monarch is a man of about forty-five, of ordinary stature, and extremely amiable countenance. He has more beard than the generality of Oozbegs, an advantage owing to intermarriage with the Sarts, or original Persian inhabitants of Khiva. I say advantage, because the beard amongst Muhummedan nations is an object of much consequence, and and a fine beard is esteemed an especial mark of the favour of heaven. Ulla Koolie Khaun claims descent, somewhat dubiously, from the great Chenghis Khaun, whose undoubted descendant is on the throne of Kokaun. He is certainly amiable, and is accounted just. His judgment also appears to be sound. But he is of a timid disposition, and deficient of the vigour and energy of mind requisite in one, performing in his own person all important functions of the state.

He has the Oozbeg passion for field sports, and spends several months of each winter in hawking and coursing. He is free from the vices of his nation, if we except smoking, which in those countries is accounted rather an illegal indulgence.

As the Muhummedan law allows only four wives to a faithful believer, the Khaun Huzurut has no more than four at court at any given time; but, being an admirer of beauty, these are occasionally exchanged; so that the actual number

of those who are, or have been, his wives is twelve. Several of these have families. They are Oozbegs, selected chiefly from amongst the branches of the reigning family. They are close immured in the haram, and have no share in the counsels of the state, nor much influence over the actions of their master. The title of the king's wives is Bebee.

THE INAUK OF HUZZARUSP.—The second man in the kingdom is undoubtedly the Inauk of Huzzarusp, a town about forty miles south by east of Khiva. His name is Ruhmaun Koolie, and he is only brother to the Khaun Huzurut. He is in person tall and powerful, and his mind appears to be vigorous and acute. In early life, he was much addicted to wine and other sensual enjoyments, and has still all the Oozbeg taste for hawking. But his character has lately reformed. He is much consulted by his brother, who appears sincerely attached to him.

The throne of Khaurism can scarcely be said to be hereditary. It is not considered so by the Toorcumuns. The last king, Madreheem Khaun, who was second of the Oozbeg dynasty, was brother to his predecessor, whose son lives at court in great honour, although an object of some jealousy to the present monarch. He is styled the Bee. He does not appear to be a man of any talent or energy, and has not much voice in the affairs of government.

THE HEIR-APPARENT.—The third person in the kingdom is the Toorruh, or eldest son, and heir-apparent of the monarch. He is considered a young man of good sense and amiable disposition. During the annual absence of the Khaun Huzurut upon hunting expeditions, the reins of government are entrusted to the hands of this prince; but at other seasons he takes no part in affairs of state, but spends his time in hawking, and in other amusements.

THE LATE AND PRESENT MEHTURS, OR PREMIERS.—The late Mehtur or Premier, Yoosuph Bae, was a man of great talent and humanity. He had preserved his office under five successive monarchs, and was universally respected. He was absent from the capital during the massacre of the travellers and their servants, or would certainly have prevented the deed, against which he warmly protested on his return. From respect to his memory, his eldest son was made his successor in his office of Mehtur. His name is Yakoob Bae, he is a man of no talent, dignity, or importance, and only the extreme indulgence of the present monarch could preserve him in his office. One of the greatest difficulties I had to encounter at the Court of Khiva was found in the incapacity

and irresolution of this minister, with whom I had many conferences.

KHOOSH OR GHOOSH BEEGIE.—The Khoosh Beegie, or chief Falconer, is the son of the late officer of that title, a man who appears to have been much esteemed. The Khoosh Beegie had command of the force sent against the Russian expedition, and exhibited on that occasion neither courage nor military skill. As I was prohibited from all intercourse with him and other nobles of the Court, I cannot offer any particular description of their characters. It may suffice to observe, that with the Khoosh Beegie terminates all the real power and consequence of the ministry: the remaining nobles serving only to swell the retinue of the monarch, but possessing no authority at Court.

PRIESTHOOD. — The Heads of the Priesthood are the Nuqeeb, and Sheikh ool Islaum. From this body are chosen the Cawzees, or magistrates, who decide all trifling controversies, and many criminal causes. Those of greater weight and importance are referred to the Khaun Huzurut himself; and every sentence of death requires his confirmation, given after a personal investigation. Where so much is to be performed by an individual, from whom there is no appeal, many instances of injustice and undue severity may be expected; but one of the safeguards of equity is found in the absolute power of the monarch, frequently exercised, to punish with death or mutilation, a false oath.

The Toorcumuns and Kuzzauks, dwelling in the Wilderness, have their own separate jurisdictions; all sentences of death requiring the royal confirmation. Each tribe of Toorcumuns has its chief, under whom are Yooz Baushees, or chiefs of 100 families. Under these again are the Reesh Sofeyd, or white beards, selected by the community for the decision of petty causes.

Such are the meagre particulars which my very limited opportunities enabled me to collect. Even these were not noted upon paper, excepting the numbers of the tribes; for as I was about to visit other countries on quitting Khiva, I did not think it prudent to carry memoranda, which might be prejudicial to that State in the hands of enemies. Were leisure allowed me for comparing together the relations of other travellers, I might make this Appendix fuller, and more complete; but I have no prospect of ever enjoying such an advantage, and must therefore cast myself upon the indulgence of the public.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE CASPIAN AND ARAL SEAS.

IN a work upon Khiva, compiled by Zimmerman, and translated by Morier,* many traditions and authorities are brought together, tending at first sight to prove the Eastern coast of the Caspian, to have been removed Westward of its former position. Upon comparing these, however, nothing amounting to strong probability results. Abulfeda speaks of a hill, from the summit of which, on a clear day, the Caspian and Aral were visible. But is it surprising that any considerable summit should command a view East and West of forty miles? Again, Jenkinson travels from the Caspian to Oorgunj, starting on the 14th of an unknown month, and reaching a gulf of the Caspian, and starting from it on the 5th of October, and reaching Oorgunj on the 16th, making thus twelve days march between this gulf and Oorgunj.

Now this gulf is undoubtedly the Karasoo inlet, on which stands Nuovo Alexandrofski (or Dahsh Gullah), this being in the direct line of march, formerly followed by caravans from Mungh Kishlauk to Oorgunj, but shunned since the Russians built a fort there. And if by Oorgunj, old Oorgunj is meant, Jenkinson made the distance in exactly the time at this day consumed in the journey. If new Oorgunj, he travelled it in about two days less than the ordinary period. This, therefore, is no proof of any change in the coast of the Caspian.

The Abulkhaun mountains of Abulghazi, are undoubtedly the Bulkhaun mountains of the present day.

That very great changes have taken place in the level of the Caspian, the whole western portion of Khaurism attests; but it is not so easy to discover the origin of the change, or changes; for, after the passage of four or five centuries, objects and features assume an appearance of antiquity, not easily distinguishable from those a thousand years anterior in origin.

Between Khiva and Mungh Kishlauk, I found high table

* Published by J. Madden, 8, Leadenhall-street.

which I have reason to think again occurs between the seas, as far as the sixty-fourth degree North latitude. This land seemed to me not less than 1,500 feet higher than the level of the Caspian. I had, indeed, neither thermometer nor barometer; but I judged by the breadth and steepness of acclivities, and by finding the snow spread over those heights a month after its entire disappearance from the nearly parallel latitude of Oorgunj. This is the more remarkable, because in those countries, when the winter breaks up, the transition is very sudden, owing to the vast accumulation of solar heat upon the extensive desert tracts. Now, this high table land is formed of chalk and marle covered with a thin stratum of limestone, composed of the shells of the Caspian. It has, therefore, at some distant period, been part of the basin of this sea, when, as now, an inland sea, and as, in order to its submersion, as at present it exists, the whole of Tartary must have been likewise submerged: it is less difficult to attribute its present elevation to some convulsion of nature, at a period extremely remote, probably anterior to the existence of the human race. With this, therefore, we have nothing to say.

But the lower land, for some distance from the Eastern shore of the Caspian, is broken into cliffs and basins, that gives the idea of comparatively recent occupation by that sea. Nay, these phenomena are observable as far as within about fifty miles North-West of Khiva, although, in the latter case, the abandonment seems more remote, and the traces are less indubitable. This may have been occasioned by a sudden escape of the waters of the Caspian, or by their gradual desiccation. In the former case, the hypothesis by which this sea is connected in remote periods with the Euxine, seems highly probable; but nothing less than the discovery, on the coast of the Euxine, of shell limestone precisely similar to that of Khaurism, could establish the existence together of these seas in one isolated basin.

If the volume of the Caspian has been abated by a gradual desiccation, several causes may have concurred to this effect. In the first place, it is an established fact, that the Caspian has been deprived, during several hundred years, of the body of water poured into it formerly by the Oxus, and, less certainly, by the Jaxartes. This body of water (I speak only of that of the Oxus) amounted to 4,778,720,160,000 cubic feet annually, or, in 1000 years, to 2,648,294,000,000,000 cubic feet, which, spread over the surface of the Caspian, reckoned at 4,039,580,160,000 square feet, would add 1180 feet to its

present level. As, however, even the third part of such a body of fluid would have increased greatly the surface of the Caspian, a considerable portion of this must have been lost in evaporation, we will suppose three-fourths; and still the Caspian is left 295 feet lower than at this moment it would have been, had the course of the Oxus remained unchanged. If, therefore, the Caspian, 1000 years ago, was not increasing yearly in volume, it is now 295 feet lower than it then was. Such a supposition will account for all observed phenomena; and it will be remembered, that I have not made allowance for the waters of the Jaxartes, which probably once terminated in the Caspian.

The supposition, adopted by Zimmerman, that the Caspian has mined itself a basin farther west, is utterly untenable. The lower waters of the Caspian are never in motion. It is a mere lake, guiltless of tides, those effecters of change in the coasts of our globe, and no one, who has ever seen the cliffs of the eastern shore of the Caspian, could imagine their having served any purpose but their present. A lake cannot delve for itself a new channel. What is it to do with the debris of the cliffs it has thrown down? They must remain where they fall, or, at best, can only be deposited in the profoundest depths of the old basin, gradually to fill it up, and cause an overflow of waters, but not a gradual shifting of the basin itself.

Now if we suppose the shrinking of the Caspian to be occasioned by the failure of a tributary river, this shrinking must continue, until the surface of the sea be only sufficient for the evaporation of the waters poured into it; and it seems not improbable that this balance is still incomplete, and that the level of the Caspian sinks yearly.

As the changes produced upon the face of these countries has been generally referred to one of two causes, namely the sudden outbreak of the Euxine, through the Dardanelles, or the gradual desiccation of the waters which once covered great part of the steppe of the Oorahl and a portion of that of Khaurism, it may not be amiss to offer a few words upon the latter supposition.

Until we have correct levels of the lands adjacent to the Caspian and Euxine, it is impossible to build a satisfactory theory upon the disappearance of waters, which have left so many testimonies of their former presence. But to imagine a gradual desiccation, within the limits of our chronology, is to assume a distinct period for changes, which have generally baffled research, receding in proportion as they were followed

by enquiry, until lost in the haze of eternity. For, if a gradual desiccation has drained the submerged lands, some violent catastrophe, not in the usual order of nature, must have deposited those waters there, within a calculable period; and if that convulsion be the same by which other seas and continents have received their several forms and locations, then are such extensive operations brought within the range of historical antiquity. It is, farther, to suppose an effect not elsewhere observed upon the same scale; and, therefore, belonging to the class Prodigy. It is also to nullify a fact presented to our bodily eyes, namely, the present connection of the Euxine with the ocean; a connection, which could not have existed when the lands in question were covered by the waters of the Caspian; since those waters must have held a level higher than the present level of the ocean, to inundate lands which the ocean cannot reach. If we suppose this large tract of steppe to have been submerged beneath the Caspian, we must believe that the Caspian and Euxine were united; and when the Caspian and Euxine were united, it is impossible that either could have communicated with the sea.

Here then we find the desiccation supposition not only unnecessary, but an absolute encumbrance. It accounts for nothing that is not otherwise accounted for; and it requires for its support the invention of facts unrecorded, and of which we have not even circumstantial evidence.

Undoubtedly, on the disjunction of the Caspian and Euxine, which must have happened a few months after the escape of the latter to the ocean, the surface of the Caspian may have been too large for the body of water poured into it, and its desiccation would be the consequence. At the disjunction of the seas, the isthmus at present separating them, would have been the level of the Caspian; and this is, at present, elevated far above it. Moreover, we perceive by the current from the Euxine to the ocean that its present surface is inadequate to the evaporation of the rivers it receives; so that when the seas were one, the greater part of the water which submerged the lands in question must have been received from the feeders of the Euxine. The surface left to the Caspian would therefore evaporate more than its annual receipt of water, and its volume would continue to shrink, until the balance were attained.

Another theory is broached by Mr. Zimmermann, in the work already referred to. It is the theory of the Oxus, in reference to the gradual desiccation. He supposes this desiccation, not to be the mere effect of evaporation upon the

waters of the Caspian; but to have affected the sources and tributaries of the Oxus and Jaxartes. In their former fulness he supposes that the Aral may have been but an inland lake of the Oxus; and that in its overflow, it poured into the bay of Balkaun that body of water, which has mined the channel ascribed to the Oxus.

This theory is plausible, and in order to it, we require only one supposition; and that, although unsupported by any record or tradition, is not very difficult of belief. If, therefore, we cannot account for existing appearances without it, we may allow it. If it be needless we shall scout it. Unless our argument has been vain, it is needless.

The result I should deduce from all these considerations is, that in remote times the Euxine and Caspian probably formed together one isolated sea, covering much of the steppe of the Oorahl, that which lies between Astrakhan and the sea of Azov, and probably that bordering the Embah. That this sea in process of time accumulated a sufficient body of water to mine an outlet into the Archipelago, leaving the Caspian isolated, and of surface considerably more extended than at present; which surface, being more than sufficient for the evaporation of its tributaries, gradually dwindled to its present dimensions. That the course of the Oxus, in the days of Alexander the Great (I note this period after the traditions existing in Khaurism) turned by a bold curve round to the South West, and lost itself in the gulf of Balkaun. That the Sirr or Jaxartes through its old channel (the Djan Derriah) mingled its waters with the Oxus in the neighbourhood of Bèsh Tishik, and flowed with it to the Caspian. That in the course of time, the Jaxartes, following the invariable law of Nature, mined for itself a course less tortuous than that which it had originally pursued, and found a basin farther North, capable of receiving its waters. That the Oxus, released from the thrust from the North East, which had determined its waters to the Caspian, pursued the natural and more direct course, and fell into the new basin, gradually abandoning, and at length utterly, the Caspian. That the Caspian, deprived of the waters of two very considerable rivers, gradually shrank in its dimensions.

In this theory, however, there is an assumption, unsupported by any established fact. I mean the former connection of the Caspian and Euxine, and the disjunction of the latter from the ocean.

Translation of a Furmaun addressed by ULLAH KOOLI KHAUN, *King of Khaurism, to* CAPTAIN JAMES ABBOTT, *on a Mission to His Majesty's Court.*

THE words of the father of the Victorious, the Conqueror, the Lord of Heroes, the King of Khaurism.

Be it known to the sincere and faithful, honored by our confidence and regard, Captain Abbott, exalted and chosen by our royal kindness and kingly favour, that in these happy times, Moollah Muhummud Saleh, son of Cauzie Muhummud Hussun, having come on a pilgrimage to our heaven-rivalling threshold, has begged permission to follow that gentleman (Captain Abbott) and we granting his request, have sent you the above named Moollah. Please Almighty God, he, the Moollah, after the honour of presenting himself to you, will fully advise you of the particulars of all occurrences connected with these parts. The words of this favor-breathing epistle, given.*

* NOTE.—The above was written in Persian, in compliment to my ignorance of Toorkish, in which all Furmauns and Despatches are written at the Court of Khaurism.

Translation of a Treatise upon Damask Steel, by Colonel Anossoff, of the Corps of Engineers, Imperial Army of Russia, Master of the Fabric of Arms at Zlataoost, in Siberia, and reviver of the Damask.

IN Russia, we understand by the Damask, a metal harder, and supplying a material for arms, of keener edge than ordinary steel.

Our Poets, ancient as well as modern, generally arm their heroes with Damask blades, a proof that this kind of arm has long been known in Russia; although the art of their fabrication was unknown, and that of distinguishing them was anything but popular.

The original country of the Damask is the East, and there is reason to think, that its properties were even less understood in other countries of Europe than in Russia. To judge how far they were from having just notions regarding this metal about fifty-five years ago, one need but cast the eye over the work entitled, "Histoire du fer, du metallurgiste Suedois, Rinmunn," a standard work in its day. Even to our own days, the nature of the damask is an enigma, not only as regards its chemical structure, but even its physical properties.

All the researches of chemists have, until now, failed of discovering any essential difference between the damask and ordinary steel; which, nevertheless, proves only that the analysis has been imperfect, it is only want of means that prevents success. Notwithstanding the rapid progress of chemistry, it has not yet attained perfection, and perhaps many things must remain for ever, impenetrable secrets to the art. Although the chemists of the present day presume that the natural damask is the effect of a crystallization produced by retarded cooling of the heated metal; yet, not having the means of producing a damask equal to the ancient work of

Asia, they cannot establish this ground, although they have before their eyes, the laws of crystallization discovered by the mineralogist Hauy.

If crystallization generally is but the result of the structure of bodies, under certain physical considerations, the question follows, wherefore in the damask is it not the result of a similar cause, and as common steel acquires no visible damask by gradual refrigeration, is not this a convincing proof that the composition of damask differs from that of ordinary steel. If chemical analysis fails to discover that difference, we can only conclude that it answers not its end. The researches of metallurgists and of artificers, who have been at pains to make the damasks, and to inform themselves of the ancient art, have made no decisive progress. I have seen no damask of superior quality wrought in Europe; and that which has been written upon the subject gives no sufficient light; for I have found in no treatise upon the damask any provision for perfecting the steel. Thus, on one hand, the imperfection of our chemical knowledge, and, on the other, the difficulty of fabricating the damask, leave Europeans still in uncertainty as to its merits. Many scientific men, relying upon chemical analysis, refuse credence to the superior qualities of the damask, whilst amateurs, who have any knowledge of the subject, set as great value upon it, as do the people of the East, and willingly pay 50*l.* and upwards for the best damask blade.

Time out of mind the damask has been used in Asia; and to this day it has lost nothing in price. Nevertheless, the Orientals, although less advanced in knowledge than ourselves, could not be deceived, throughout the course of ages, upon the merit of objects purchased only at a very high price.

It is about ten years since this consideration made me doubt the infallibility of the results of chemistry, and incline to the judgment of the ancients, as better founded upon the question of the damask. Thence originated my desire to observe the different qualities, and to discover the means of its fabrication.

The first comparison of the Russian damask before the tribunal of the public, at the approaching exhibition of Russian fabrics, induces me to publish, although in an abridged form, my ideas upon the subject of the damask, acquired during an experience of ten years. Perchance they may serve to facilitate a discrimination of the various kinds of damask, to such of my fellow manufacturers as have

yet enjoyed little opportunity of examining and testing them.

All steel, which exhibits a surface figured with dark lines, is called damask.

In some of the various kinds of steel, these figures appear immediately after burnishing, while in others dilute acid is necessary to bring them out. The juices of plants and ordinary vinegar suffice for this effect. The process of bringing out the figures of steel is called corrosion.

The Damascene which appears upon the surface of steel is very various: nevertheless, this Damascene does not *alone* confer upon steel the title of damask; on ordinary steel, similar figures may be brought out, by subjecting it to corrosion, after having designed upon it the figure required; but whatever pains may be taken to make such resemble genuine damask, the eye of a connoisseur easily detects the counterfeit, without examining the quality of the metal. Hence has arisen the epithet of "false damask."

A second kind of damask exhibits also an artificial Damascene, which nevertheless is peculiar to the metal itself, so that, how often soever it is repolished, the same figure will reappear whenever it is subjected to corrosion. This damask is known as "artificial damask." It is composed of several sorts of steel interlaid with iron. The beauty of such damask is various, and consists partly in the quality of the several materials, partly in the skill with which they are worked together. These artificial damasks are chiefly wrought in Asia, viz., India, Turkey, Georgia; but the artificial damasks of Europe have attained as yet no great reputation, because the European workmen are more intent upon producing elegant figures on the steel than in improving the metal itself. Thus the artificial damasks, as those of Solinger and Klingenthal, although exhibiting the Damascene, have not the figures characteristic of superior metal.

In fine, whatever may be the beauty of artificial damasks, they will not bear comparison with good natural damasks, for, if filed, the Damascene does not re-appear.*

The natural damasks of Asia differ from the artificial in the

* I must beg to differ with my ingenious friend in this matter; if, indeed, I have rightly translated him. Damask formed of mixed metals will re-appear, however much it may be filed. This is a fact well known to all gun-makers, who employ iron of several different colors, in forging gunbarrels, to give them what is called the twist, in other words an artificial Damascene. My friend must here be alluding to "false damasks."

re-appearance of their inimitable and (so to speak) innate Damascene, as well as by the faculty of re-producing the same Damascene after having been filed, if the constituent particles remain unchanged.

In Asia we observe many kinds of damask. The difference between them depends upon the places in which they have been wrought, the manner of their fabric, and the various qualities of the material. Those most in use are known by the names Daban, Kara Daban, Khorussaun, Kara Khorussaun, Gundo, Koum Gundy, Neuris, and Schaum (Syria).

The Orientals judge of the goodness of the damask by its figures, by the colour of the ground (that is the intervals between the figured lines), and by the play of colours. They consider the Daban and Khorussaun (to the latter they sometimes add Kara, or black) to be the best blades. The Schaum is the least esteemed. The constant experience of many years assures me, that the marks upon which the orientals found their judgment of the goodness of the damask are a more certain criterion of the true quality of the metal than all the tests to which it is subjected in Europe; these enabling the testers to form no more than a proximate estimate of the quality of the steel, most generally during the process of fabrication, and not after completion of the object, the quality of which still remains to be determined by proofs, conformed to the purpose for which it is designed. As the mark of the workman is the sole guarantee of the quality of the work, so the Asiatic is never deceived in the intrinsic value of the damask, and fails not to laugh on seeing an European test its quality by filing it, or making it cut iron, especially as the hardness of metal is conditional, depending upon its temper. If the damask be carefully corroded, all further test is needless.

As above stated, the first and most essential sign of the damask is its Damascene. In proportion as it is thick, defined, fantastic, in the same proportion is the quality of the metal fine. The thickest Damascene is about the size of the notes of music, the middling as large as ordinary print, and the finest is that which we can just follow with the naked eye. As to the method of recognising the quality of damask by its figures, and to the re-appearance of the Damascene, although they depend upon invariable laws, it were easier to give an idea by samples than by simple description. Nevertheless, it may not be useless here to add certain directions upon the subject, which are not founded upon practice alone, but proved by the process I employ in the fabric of damask.

Like written character, the Damascene consists of points, of right lines, and curves, which serve to distinguish the quality of the damask, as follows :—

1st. The Damascene formed principally of right lines almost parallel denotes the lowest quality of the damask.

2nd. When the right lines become shorter, and are partly replaced by curves, they denote a better quality than the first.

3rd. When the lines are interrupted, show points, and when the dimensions of the curves increase, this is a still better symptom.

4th. When the interrupted lines become still shorter, or, rather, when they change to points, as they increase in number, so as to form in the breadth of the steel here and there, as it were, nets, interlinked by threads which undulate in diverse directions from one net to the other. In this case the damask approaches perfection.

Finally, when the nets open farther to form figures resembling grapes, or when they occupy the entire breadth of the steel, and partake it in nearly equal articulations, in that case the damask may be recognised as of the highest possible quality.*

Another feature, by which the quality of damask may be understood, is the hue of its ground. The deeper the tint, the more perfect the metal. The ground of the damask may be grey, brown, or black.

A third feature is the play of colours upon the metal, when its surface is subjected to an oblique light. In observing many thus, we perceive, that some amongst them shew no variation of tint, whilst others take a crimson or a golden hue. The more perceptible this play of colours, the finer the quality of the damask. Nevertheless this test is affected by the degree of corrosion. When the corrosion is very great, the play of colour is not observed. No art can produce the red hue upon inferior damask. Therefore the damask may be divided into two distinct classes, viz. that which has the red hue, and that which wants it.

When the three characters, above noted, are found in union and at their maximum, we may confidently pronounce

* Damask blades of this description are found in the Museum of rare objects of the aide-de-camp general, Perroffski; an officer who, by his love for the arts and sciences has entered deeply into my researches, and by his condescending kindness in procuring me access to Damasks of the most perfect kind, has greatly contributed to my stock of information.

the damask to be of the most perfect kind, which will in no case fail of the following qualities:—

Perfect malleability and ductility.

The hardest possible substance after tempering.

The keenest and firmest possible edge.

And

elasticity, when properly tempered.

The other damasks possess various degrees of perfection, according as the three above named qualities are more or less remarkable.

I do not follow the nomenclature of Eastern Nations in defining the varieties of damask, because they do not always denote the various degrees of its perfection. It appears to me more convenient to use in Russia, a nomenclature, founded upon the water alone. By this rule, five kinds of damask may be noted, viz.—the streaked, the striated, the reticulated, and the knotted. Each of these kinds may have one of the following characters—

a A Damascene, coarse, middle sized, or minute.

b A ground, grey, brown, or black.

c A hue changing in the light to red; or exhibiting no change.

Amongst damasks of inferior quality, may be found some, inferior to cast steel of medium quality; but it is not known that the best cast steel may compare with the finest damask. Comparative proofs have convinced me, that the damask offers the highest possible perfection of steel; and the relations we receive from those who have visited Japan, the Indies, Persia, and Turkey, are not so exaggerated as many suppose. A well tempered sabre of good damask, will easily sever bones, iron nails, and the most flimsy kerchief as it floats in the air. But I must beg leave to doubt the possibility of performing similar feats, with similar ease with European blades, such as those of Klingenthal; as we are assured, in a late publication,* for I am persuaded that the blades of Klingenthal, of Solingen, as well as those of Zlataoose, of similar temper to good damask, cannot be compared with the latter, whether in edge, in solidity, or in elasticity.

The employment of damask might, I think, be extended with advantage not only to the fabric of arms, but in general to every steel article requiring edge or solidity.

* Manuel complet de travail des Metaux, traduit de l'Anglais de Docteur Lardner, par A. D. Vergniaud. Paris, 1838, tom. i. p. 233.

So far Colonel Anossoff; a man whose researches in this department of science have enabled him to revive the natural damask, in a degree of perfection which I have never observed in the workmanship even of the ancients, and which certainly cannot be approached by fabrics of any Eastern nation at present existing.

This, it will be allowed, is very high authority: the more especially, as the Russian collections exhibit probably a greater variety of damasks, than those of any other European nation. And to differ in any point with such an authority, may not only seem presumptuous, but may absolutely ensure the rejection of my opinions as futile. Nevertheless, as I have taken upon me to reprint his valuable remarks in a work of my own, it seems incumbent upon me to add to them some of the results of my own experience.

I have from childhood had a passion for everything connected with arms, and have never neglected an opportunity of examining such as came within my reach, and of reading add carefully treasuring all that is written upon the subject of their qualities and construction. I have also cursorily run over great part of Asia, have been many years in India, and have examined three or four of the principal collections of blades in Russia. The result of my experience and researches, would assure me that either Colonel Anossoff's Oriental classification differs essentially from that prevailing in Khorussaun, or that our estimates of the qualities of the damask are at variance.

The blade known in Khorussaun as the Khorussaunee blade, has a very dark hue, betraying a steel highly carbonised. The figures of its Damascene are very various, and I despair of giving any distinct idea of them without the aid of plates, which my present position precludes me from attempting; the more especially as nearly all my collection of swords and daggers has been lost in my late wanderings.

1. The kind least esteemed is a light grey, having a granulated surface, the spots of which are rather long in the course of the metal. This kind is also forged at Lahore and Siroee.

2. The second kind has a figuring of coarse dark lines upon a grey ground. These lines exhibiting figures almost precisely similar to the grain of a young oak, when the oblique section has passed near the centre of the tree.

3. A third has the same grey ground and dark irregular lines; but these are more continuous, and not disposed in concentric figures, but have rather the appearance of tissues of wire running into every serpentine shape.

4. A fourth is a repetition of the last, but the lines are finer, and the figures more uniform in their irregularity, forming homogeneous masses, so to speak. This is the kind most highly esteemed by the people of Khorussaun. It varies greatly in beauty and value, and may be purchased at from 5*l.* to 500*l.*

5. A fifth kind exhibits a series of articulations, of which I have counted thirty-six in a sword-blade. These articulations, or knots, are formed by dense masses of nearly parallel lines, disposed lengthwise in the blade; the masses running into one another. At the junction they are excessively fine. On turning the blade, it will be found that each junction on the one side corresponds with the centre of a mass on the other. This is certainly the most beautiful variety of Khorussaunee blade; but I have not observed that it is so highly esteemed as the finer kinds of the foregoing variety. It varies greatly in quality. The finest lines denoting that which is considered best.

All these blades when attentively scrutinized will be found to possess a seam down the back. None of them possess any elasticity. They will either break short like cast-iron, or bend like lead. Their shape is a simple and often an abrupt wedge; the very worst of shapes for cutting, owing to the great friction which the lips of the wound exert upon the sides. Their figure is too crooked for defence. They are not esteemed, unless a cat can walk under the curve when placed edge upwards on the earth; neither is this degree of curve sufficient to confer great value, unless it be elegant in its gradations. The edge is generally obtuse, and seems formed rather to bear the shock with armour and with other blades than to cut deep. The breadth is seldom great, but they are thick at the back, and always ill poised. The best are from Isfahaun; but I understand that the art is almost lost even there. I have never seen a Khorussaunee sabre pointed with a double-edge. It is true that the blade is too crooked to be used in thrusting; yet I have seen Damascus blades equally crooked that had the double-edged point.

The daggers of Khorussaun are somewhat different in water or Damascene from the sabres of that country; greater care seems to have been taken in the process. The lines upon them run into the most delicate and perfect spirals, and minute curves. They are generally of the most elegant figures; seldom double-edged, probably from the superstition against this figure prevalent at Khiva, where the double-edged dagger is religiously disused, because

Hosein, the son of Ali, was slain with a double-edged knife. The point is generally triangular and tapering, serving well to force the links of chain armour, which was once commoner than at present. They have, however, a double-edged dagger called Khunja, which is worn in Persia, although that people being Sheeahs, are so much more interested in the fate of Hussun and Hosein.

One of the peculiarities observable in all good Khorussaunee blades is that toward the edge, the hue of the steel increases in depth, betraying more strongly the presence of carbon.

In Colonel Anossoff's oriental nomenclature, occur several names unknown, I think in Khorussaun and India; for instance, Daban, Gundy, and Neuris. Upon these I can of course offer no remarks. But with respect to the blade of Schaum, I know not how the Tartars dwelling in Russia may apply the epithet; but its real and original meaning is the blade of Damascus; a city which has given name to all steel fabrics exhibiting upon their surface what is termed water. It is true that the art of Damascening seems in the present day to be lost at Damascus; and the blades forged in Syria may therefore deserve the contemptuous estimate which the Tartars of Russia seem to entertain for them. But there can be little doubt, that of all watered blades, the Damascus blade was the most perfect, and the only blade of this description anciently forged that had any elasticity. I confess I have never met with an elastic Damascus blade; but there seems to be sufficient evidence that the ancient fabric was elastic. And as European travellers would naturally, after the fashion of their people, test any sword brought for examination by bending it, they could scarcely have fallen into error on this point.

A blade that was in my possession, essentially different from those of Khorussaun and India in figure and texture, and wrought in Egypt, probably by Syrian workmen, exhibited the most exquisite water, and an edge that I have never seen equalled. But, although not brittle, it was unelastic. It is to be observed that such blades are generally so massive as to render elasticity a matter of little moment, as they will not shiver in any concussion, and scarcely any force to which a sabre is liable will materially impair their straightness. Their colour is a very pale azure. The streaks are delicate, elegantly waved and curved, much fainter than in the Khorussaunee blades, and appear to be brought out without the aid of acids, by the mere action of the atmosphere. Nothing that I have seen approaches in beauty to

these blades, or in firmness and keenness of edge. The people of Khorussaun term them Misrie, that is Egyptian, and believe that they will sever steel. The kingdoms of Egypt and Syria having lately been under one head, I have little doubt that whatever art of Damascening remains in either land, will at present be found at Alexandria and Cairo.

The streaked damask spoken of in Colonel Anossoff's Memoir, I have not noticed, because I do not conceive it to deserve the title, being a wretched imitation of the Khorussaun blade.

Of the damask of Hindoostaun, I am not prepared at present to speak largely. It is forged at Guzeraut, Siroee, and Lahore. Its water is granulated. Its edge is keen. It is, I believe, invariably brittle. I must except the Siroee blade, as I have seen of this but few specimens. That of Lahore appears to me the worst. The damask of Guzeraut is extremely hard and keen edged, but so brittle that a back of soft iron is added, as in bone saws, to fortify it. It is one of four kinds of blade forged at Guzeraut, if I may credit general report. One kind being fabricated at each of the four gates of the city. One of the plain Guzerautee blades is elastic, and superior to any other of Indian manufacture.

The Russian damask, discovered or revived by my friend Colonel Anossoff, is a peculiar modification of cast steel, by which it is impressed with a peculiar character, in its crystallization; which character betrays itself, when the corrosion of acids, by acting more violently between the interstices of the structure than elsewhere, traces out the arrangement of the crystals. This property is communicated to the damask of Zlataoost by a process tending to perfect the quality of the steel, and to impress upon cast steel the elastic properties of a softer material. The general fault of European blades is, that being forged of shear steel, for the sake of elasticity, they are scarcely susceptible of the keen edge which cast steel will assume. The genius of Anossoff has triumphed over this objection, not in hardening the soft steel, but in giving elasticity to the hard; and it may be doubted whether any fabric in the world can compete with that of Zlataoost, in the production of weapons combining in an equal degree edge and elasticity. The water of this variety of damask resembles most that of No. 5 of my list above. It is a succession of small bundles of almost parallel lines, occupying the whole breadth of the blade; the ends of the bundles crossing and mingling at the point of junction. I have called them nearly parallel lines, because such they are to superficial observation.

They are, however, a series of minute curves, forming together lines, disposed in bundles articulated together, and dividing the length of the weapon into many sections. They have not the regular articulation of the articulated Khorussaunee blade, but their lines are infinitely finer. I have seen several which were condemned for insufficient temper, submitted to the action of the engine by which they are broken. The blades were bent double, and back again several times ere they could be divided. The red hue observed upon damask blades I have seen only on those of Zlataoost.

Since the publication of the first edition of this work, I have witnessed the whole process of forging the cast steel or Damascene blade, as practised at Goojrat, in the Punjaub; this must not be mistaken for Guzeraut in the West of India. I here reprint the description, which I sent for publication to the Journal of the Asiatic Society.

Process of working the Damascus Blade of Goojrat.

I have just returned from Jullalpoor in Goojrat, (the Goojrat of the Punjaub,) and am prepared to describe the whole process adopted there in the fabric of sword blades.

The blade of Goojrat is of two kinds, the simple and the mixed damask.

The simple damask is precisely similar to the damask of Isfahaun in Persia. Its Damascene is a granulation covering the entire surface of the blade, and often disposed in lateral processes; as if the blade had been woven throughout of infinitely fine wires. At other times, this granulation is streaky like a skein of floss silk that has been rumpled into innumerable wrinkles too minute to be followed by the eye.

At other times it has the grain observed in timber, when intersected obliquely.

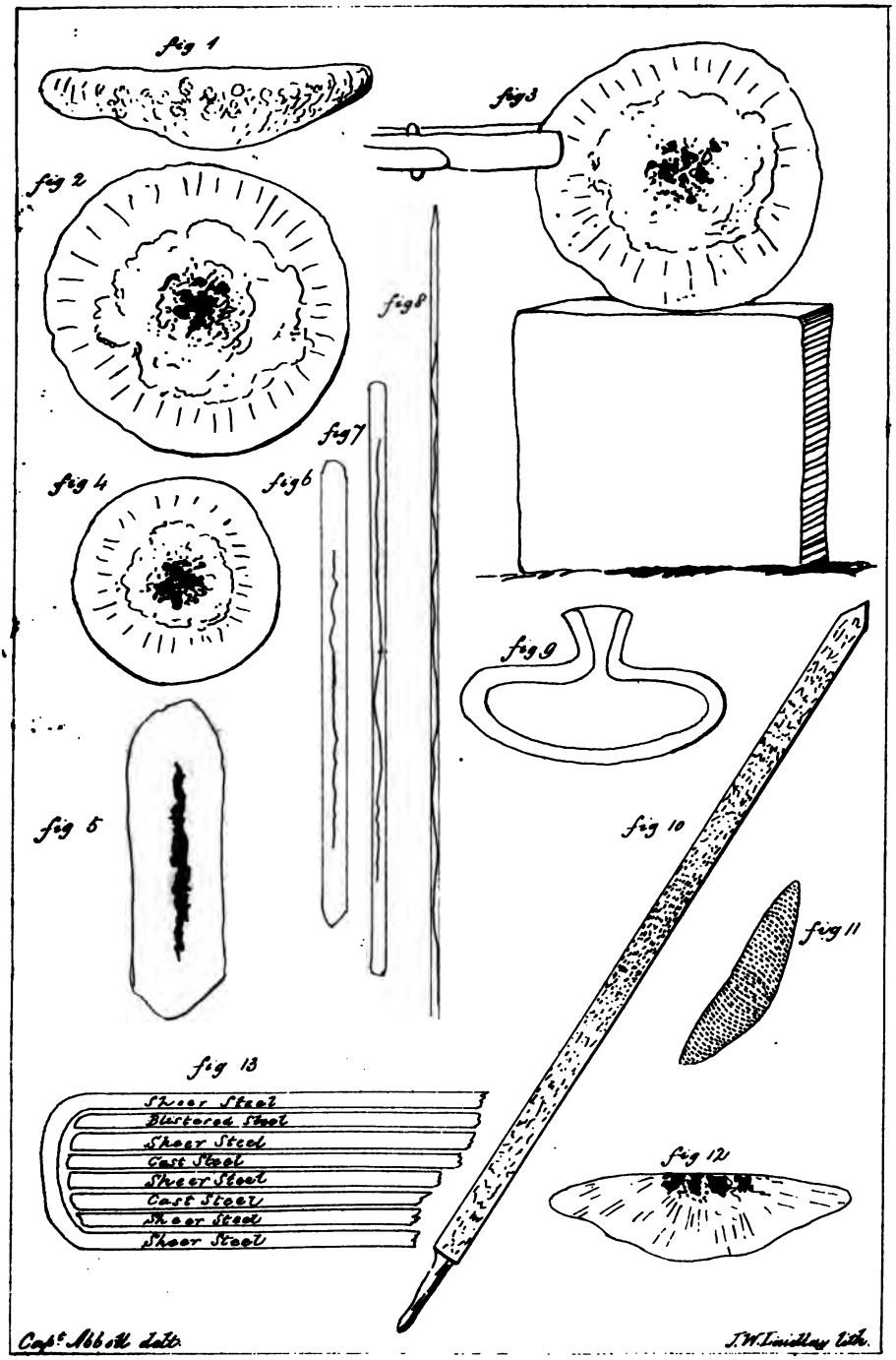
All these different kinds are the same substance submitted to the same process. At least, the general treatment and intention are the same; and the differences arise from accident, not design.

The substance is a small cake of cast steel weighing about two pounds and exhibiting manifest symptoms of the fluid condition in which it acquired its plano-convex shape. That is, the lower or convex surface, bears the impression of the

coarse gravelly mould into which it was poured, or crucible in which it was cooled. And the upper or flat surface has those concentric wrinkles and radiations, which all metals take in crystallizing after fusion. This cast steel (*fowlahd*) is purchased at Umritsur in the small cakes above noted. The natives know not its origin, but only that it comes from the south, and can be purchased at Delhi, in large as well as in small cakes. In India, if the same question is asked, the natives reply, that it comes from the north. It is, probably, therefore, brought up the Indus and Sutlej from the Persian gulf.

The accompanying figures 1 and 2 represent the plan and profile of a mass lying upon the table before me. Now, upon considering the internal structure of this, we are aware that it is a bundle of concentric needles crystallized around a porous centre, the vesicles of which are coarse and apparent, formed by the splash of the metal as it fell fluid into the mould, or of the dross and earthy particles floating at surface in a crucible. These I have rudely represented in dots in figure 12. It is also manifest, that the most solid portions of the mass are the lower or convex surface. And, accordingly, in beating it out into a bar, great care is taken to preserve each surface distinct from the other, in order that the edges of the lenticular mass may become the edge; and the flat, porous surface the back. Under any other disposition the damask figures would be confused and unseemly; and, as cast steel cannot be welded by any art known in Asia, the porosity of the centre of crystallization in the mass, would either offer a jagged, flawed edge, or one of the sides must be disfigured and weakened by it. And thus the arrangement pursued in the fabric of the simple damask blade is suggested by sound sense. The elegance and symmetry arising from the arrangement is the accidental but necessary consequence.

The mass of cast steel being brought to white heat and held, as represented in figure 3, edgewise upon the anvil, is beaten into a square prism or bar—an operation of about two hours' duration. When the requisite length is attained, the bar is flattened under the hammer, those sides in the bar which had been the edges being placed the one above the other below, so as to become the flat surfaces of the blade. The blade being shaped with the hammer and file and roughly burnished, is brought to a dull red heat in a long charcoal fire,—a long vessel of common oil is placed within reach, and the blade is plunged by successive drawing cuts edge-fore-



James Madden, 8 Lowndes Walls Street

most into the oil; so that the edge becomes the most highly tempered part, and the back remains the softest. The excessive temper is abated in the usual manner, by laying the blade over a slow charcoal fire. It is then burnished and ground, and being carefully cleansed from grease in wood ashes, white vitriol (*kusses*) dissolved in water is rubbed over all the surface excepting the edge. This, eating deepest between the interstices of the crystals, exhibits their arrangement which constitutes the damask of the blade.

In following the mass of cast steel through all the changes of figure produced by the action of the hammer (figures 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,) we perceive that as it cannot be welded, the pores in the centre of crystallization must remain, although immensely elongated under the extension of the mass. These, accordingly, exhibit themselves in an irregular and ugly seam in the back of the blade, impairing both its elegance and its solidity. And hence it is manifest, that in order to the production of a blade without flaw, either the porous heart of the mass should be ground out previous to the action of the hammer and the hollow be refilled with shear steel, or the blade should be forged of excessive breadth, and the unsound back be ground away. But the necessity of either precaution would not exist were necks made to the moulds (figure 9) in which the steel is originally cast;* so that there might be a a surplus of metal (as in casting bullets and guns) to give solidity by pressure to the incumbent mass, and to enable the seam to rise high above the solid metal so as to be easily cut away.

We further observe, that as the flat surfaces of the blade (figure 10) are formed of the edges of the lenticular mass (figure 11) they present a section across the crystallization; rectangular in the centre, but of various obliquity toward either end. It follows, that the less the original mass is altered by hammering, the more nearly lateral will be the disposition of the dots representing the ends of crystals—and hence the various figures presented by the same metal under slightly different treatment. It is also apparent, that these figures will materially alter, according to difference in the shape of the original mass, and it may be reasonably doubted whether the shape in which the cast steel is brought to India, be the most conducive to symmetry of damask or to soundness of fibre.

* On consideration, it appears to me that the cast steel has received its figure, not in a mould, but in the crucible in which it was molten, and in which it was suffered to cool.

As the damask of a blade is the map of its crystallization, so it is probable that the figures alter according to the purity of the iron of which the steel is formed, the quantity of carbon contained in it, or to both these circumstances combined. Nay, the degree of heat of the fused metal at the time of casting, and the temperature of the mould in which it was formed may both contribute to differences in the crystallization.

Colonel Anossoff, himself the reviver, if not the inventor of the elastic damask, lays down the following laws, as the test of quality of the damask, viz.:—

1st. The Damascene formed principally of right lines, almost parallel, denotes the lowest quality of damask.

2nd. When the right lines become shorter and are partly replaced by curves, they denote a better quality than the first.

3rd. When the lines are interrupted, show points, and when the dimensions of the curves increase, this is a still better symptom.

4th. When the interrupted lines become still shorter, or rather when they change to points as they increase in number, so as to form in the breadth of the steel, here and there as it were, nets, interlinked by threads, which undulate in diverse directions from one net to the other; in this case the damask approaches perfection.

Finally. When the nets open further to form figures resembling grapes: or when they occupy the entire breadth of the steel and partake it in nearly equal articulations, in that case the damask may be recognised as of the highest quality.

Now, whilst I concur with Colonel Anossoff in believing that a connoisseur may read the quality of damask steel in its Damascene, I rather doubt the above being the key to the language, because the globularity of the marks must depend very much upon the angle of section of the crystals, an angle dependent upon the figure in which the steel was first cast.

Several very costly damask blades were exhibited to Burnes at Cabul, and it was explained to him that they were valued according to the continuity of the flossy streaks from hilt to point. I myself observed, when in Khorussaun, that a decided preference was given to the streaked variety, viz., to that which appears like an amalgamated mass of infinitely fine wires. It will be seen from the process of forging the simple damask that any continuity of fibre must be a mere

accident, and denotes nothing as respects the quality of the metal.

I have before me a beautiful specimen of Siberian damask, given me by Anossoff, and presenting upon its surface the prismatic play of colors which he values so highly. In appearance it differs from the Jullalabad blades chiefly in the greater uniformity of its interlaced streaks; attributable probably to a better figure in the mass of steel from which it was forged. It is elastic. The simple damask of Jullalabad being tempered in oil, has little elasticity, and the makers will not warrant it to undergo any proof. It is liable both to bend without recovery and to snap short on concussion. The same is observable of the damask of Khorussaun, constructed by a similar process. The cast steel, when tempered in water, becomes too brittle for sword blades, and the elasticity given by oil is not greater than that which brass possesses.

A very elegant elastic blade which I purchased in Siberia, and thought cheap at twenty guineas, exhibits a damask of oval cencentric rings, so regular and beautiful, that I would not believe it to be a real damask, until a portion of the blade had been burnished and the acid applied in my presence, when the re-appearance of the Damascene, placed the matter beyond doubt. I have seen a similar though less beautiful Damascene upon daggers forged at Isfahaun. It is difficult to imagine this to be the mere exhibition of crystallization.

The simple damask of Jullalabad is wrought into three figures:—1. The very narrow, rather thick, much curved Khorussaunee sabre—whose section is an abrupt wedge, unwieldy in the grasp, and as unfit for offence as for defence. 2. The broader, much curved, plain or fluted blade of Damascus, with a double-edged point, which its curvature nullifies. And 3. A long straight single or double-edged blade, broad, thin, and fluted, wider near the point than at the hilt; always set in a basket hilt, with a pummel projecting three inches to protect the sword-arm, and much used by gladiators who exhibit at the Mohurrum.* All are forged in the same manner from the same material, yet each has its own separate Damascene, owing to the greater diffusion of the grain of crystallization in one kind than in the other. In the very narrow blade it is more streaky, in the broad blade it more resembles the most delicate of the streaks upon watered

* It is supposed to represent the blade with which Hosyne, son of Ali, was murdered, and is called Syf.

ribbands. The darkening of the blade toward the edge, observable in Khorussaunee sabres, is not visible in these—I attribute this darkness to an increase of carbon. But at Jullalpoor, the sword-cutlers think it proceeds from increase of temper, and that the stain upon the damask is dark according to the degree of its temper.

Such is the secret of the pretty but useless damask of Goojrat, at least of the simple variety. The compound damask is far less elegant, but may constitute a good blade, little inferior, perhaps, to the produce of Salinjer, though certainly less elastic. The following is the process employed in the fabric of the Sukkaila or compound damask.

A ribband of keeri or shear steel being bent into the figure of a siphon (fig. 13), is filled with six or more ribbands of cast steel, blistered steel and shear steel as accompanying diagram. I distinguished between cast steel and blistered steel, because the first has been in actual fusion, whereas the second appears to me that which goes in England by the name of "cast or blistered steel," and comes from Europe in small square bars. The mass being well hammered at welding heat, is doubled, welded, redoubled and rewelded. A small bar of sheer steel of similar length is then welded upon the side which is to be the back, and a similar bar of cast and blistered steel well mixed together is welded for the edge. It is then beaten out, flattened and shaped into a blade, and tempered in water. The Damascene of this blade is coarse, and resembles the transverse lights upon a watered ribband. It has a moderate elasticity, if well tempered; but of course its quality must depend chiefly upon the fineness of the steel employed in its fabric, and there is little choice of material in India.*

There is no doubt that a blade may thus be constructed, the edge of which may be keen as that of cast steel, whilst sufficient elasticity is preserved to render it proof against distortion or fracture under very severe shocks. And if, instead of thick ribbands of the several metals, fine wires were employed, an elegant Damascene might be the produce. This, I am inclined to think, is the original Damascus blade, as

* After writing this, I made the sword-cutler at Jullalpoor forge me a blade of shear steel, edged with cast steel, omitting the blistered steel entirely. With this blade I saw him sever, as if it had been a strip of fir, an iron ramrod, laid upon a block of wood. The edge was not even turned. This blade in in my possession. The Sukkaila blades forged at Goojrat in the usual way, with much blistered steel, always snapped at this experiment.

distinguished from the blade of Isfahaun; for, as its celebrity was greatest when defensive armour was in common use, it is absurd to suppose it could have resembled one of the faithless brittle blades of cast steel, which now bear the name.

The price of the Jullalpoor or Goojrat blade in a scabbard, without hilt, varies from eight to twelve rupees (sixteen to twenty-four shillings).

The instruments employed in the manufactory are rude and imperfect. Yet, as the solidity of a sword blade depends much upon the quantity of labour expended in hammering, the very imperfection of the implements may tend to the excellence of the work. A bar of steel under a very heavy hammer is soon beaten out; but every blow unsettles on either side as much of the crystals as it has compressed beneath it: and I believe that four times as much labour should be bestowed in hammering the slightly-heated bar, as at present it receives at Jullalpoor.

But the imperfection of the furnace tends wholly to that of the blade. For as it is impossible to give the same degree of heat to all parts of the weapon at the same time, one portion becomes harder and more brittle than the other, and the blade is more liable to fracture than if the whole were equally brittle. The equal distribution of heat throughout the blade is perhaps attainable only by immersion in molten metals, a method practised, I believe, by Savigni, the celebrated cutler.

It appears to me, on maturer thought, that the lenticular figure of the mass of cast steel may be selected by design, although perhaps originally the result of accident. For, if we follow the arrangement of the needles of crystallization from the mass into the blade, we shall perceive that the edge of the blade must be a serrated spine of these needles, radiating from the elongated ellipse into which the centre has been compressed under the hammer. And, as the power of swords, knives, razors, etc., to sever fibrous substances depends upon the serration of their edge, we have here the finest and most perfect natural saw imaginable, justifying the half-marvellous records of feats performed with Damascus blades. This property being inherent in the structure of the crystallization, is not liable to be effaced by accident or use. The acuteness of the wedge may be impaired, but the teeth of the saw cannot be destroyed.

That this arrangement of the crystals is not disturbed by the action of the hammer we learn from the water of the blade, and from the seam remaining unclosed in the back.

It follows, that however perfect the edge of the natural damask may be, the blade must always be liable to cross-fracture about the centre, where the radiations of the crystals cross the blade at right angles. And, accordingly, Asiatics use such sabres with extreme caution, not ordinarily striking with them, but drawing the edge lightly and swiftly over any unguarded part, a touch sufficient to disable, or severing with them their adversary's reins, a practice which renders necessary the use of chains upon the bridle to the distance of eighteen inches from the bit.

The natural damask seems therefore ill-adapted to the purposes of war, as practised by European nations, but seems especially suited to the fabric of razors, penknives, and surgical instruments, in which keenness of edge is of the first consequence, and elasticity of none.

The art of giving elasticity to the cast steel, or natural damask, is the secret of Col. Anossoff, the reviver. I do not consider myself at liberty to reveal it without his express permission, although I think it probable that he has published it in his own country.

This cast steel is quite unknown in England. Its origin in India is doubtful. From its Persian name "Fowlad," from its coming up the Indus to the Punjaub, and down from the Indus to Delhi, it would seem to be received from the Persian Gulf. It is a reflection upon the arts in England, that it is not known there, as there is no difficulty whatever in producing it.

ON THE DEATH OF CHARLES XII. OF SWEDEN.

SINCE writing this, I have met with Fortia's travels in Sweden, in which is an interesting discussion of the question of Charles' death. I have not leisure to transcribe the whole, but will sum up the evidence on either side.

Charles was sitting in a battery, raised against Frederickshall, the fort being considerably higher than the battery, and several hundred yards intervening. It was night, a fire of cannon and musketry was opened from the fort. The king sat, leaning his head upon his hand, his hand resting on the parapet. His head was suddenly pierced through and through by a bullet. Megret and Siquier were the only persons near Charles at the time.

Charles's death, on that day, had been foretold by an officer of high rank, and was generally expected.

Carlberb, Lieut.-Colonel of Engineers, in the trenches, says, that when Charles's body was put into the litter to be borne away, Siquier approached the litter, took the king's hat, and put that and the king's wig upon his own head.

Different opinions were entertained of the king's wound. Such as examined it, maintained that it could not have been made from the fortress or redoubts of the enemy. On a draught of the siege of Frederickshall, on which it was affirmed that the king was killed by a shot from the redoubts, an officer of high rank, who was at the time also in Norway, had written in German, with his own hand, "that is not true." No rumour was more common than that Siquier, the king's aide-de-camp had murdered the king. It is not doubted, that he himself confessed it, when ill at Stockholm, in 1722; but it is added, that this illness was accompanied with delirium. Some have imagined that remorse extorted this confession, others again have insisted, that Siquier, after his recovery was tortured with the same remorse, although then perfectly in his senses.

If Siquier was near Kacelbars and others at the time of the

king's death, why upon report attributing it to him, did he not procure their testimony of his innocence.

Mr. Fortia was credibly informed, that Siquier had no duty in the trenches, and hesitated when interrogated as to his purpose in being there.

An old cannoneer of the garrison affirms that there was no firing, that night, from the fort.

The ball passed from temple to temple, when the king was facing the fort.

Mr. Fortia affirms that the king first put his hand to the wound, then half drew his sword.

Siquier took the king's hat, and carried it to the Prince of Hesse, in proof of the king's death.

The prince was washing his hands in an ewer of gold. On learning the news, he presented it to Siquier.

Here we shall perceive many ugly and suspicious circumstances, the whole of which do not amount to even circumstantial proof. Many, moreover, are not attested by particular witnesses, but are rather *on dits*. Most, we think, might have arisen against any man suspected of such a deed. But what is the evidence for the defence.

1. Siquier tells Voltaire, "I could have killed the king of Sweden, but such was my respect for that hero, that, if I had been inclined, I should not yet have dared."

2. Siquier died poor.

3. Siquier affirms, that the bullet with which Charles was shot, was of half a pound weight, and therefore could not have been discharged from a pistol or musket.

We confess we think the defence the worst evidence against Siquier. Let us examine each item of it separately.

1st. Siquier was the king's aide-de-camp. Aides-de-camps we know, may always assassinate their masters, if inclined. Why then the assertion, I could have killed the king? Whence the idea? Again, as to his respect for the hero, surely not much was shewn in parading in the king's hat and wig, the instant he fell.

2nd. Siquier died poor. It is not said "he lived poor." That he died poor is proof of nothing, especially if he survived his principal, supposing him to have been the murderer.

3rd. Siquier justifies himself by the size of the bullet. Now, as there is abundant proof that the bullet was small, this is an awkward circumstance, because Siquier, who saw the wound, must have known that it could not have been made by a half-pound ball.

The result of this investigation proves nothing. But it

may be affirmed that, had Siquier contented himself with a simple denial, his case had been much stronger than he has made it.

"In the year 1746, on the 12th of July, between five and six o'clock in the morning, the undersigned went down into the Mausoleum, called Carolin, or Palatine, on the Equestrian aisle of the church at Stockholm, and opened the coffin of King Charles XII. defunct, whom they found in the condition and order following. A matrass, or pillow, stuffed with aromatic herbs, covered the face of the king; under his head, and joining his face, was a cloth. The head was uncovered, without any cap, but, in lieu, was surrounded with a laurel wreath. The hair was in good preservation, of a very light brown colour, and the length of a little finger, combed upwards on the sides; but the top of the head was bald. On the right side, just beneath the temple, was a plaster, which stuck so fast that with great difficulty we removed it. When removed, we perceived, and felt, an oblong orifice, slanting in a direction towards the back of the head, seven lines in length, and two in breadth. On the left side, which was covered with a plaster of the same size, the whole of the temple was torn away, and the fragments of the bones evidently denoted the passage of the ball from that part. His face was much wasted, his mouth rather open, and some of his teeth were visible. Under his head were several pillows of white linen, full of fragrant herbs. Along his sides, and on his arms a number of small white bags were laid, filled with the same materials. His arms were stretched by the side of the body, and his hands, covered with white gloves, were placed opposite each other. His shirt was of linen, of a smaller degree of fineness, and his winding sheet of cambric.

(Signed) "E. H. HARLEMAN,
E. T. EKEBLAD,
ANDREW JOHN, *of Haessken.*"

Such are the data offered by Fortia: from which he argues that Siquier murdered Charles XII. Let us see.

Where it is said that the whole of the left temple is torn away, it is added, "and the fragments of bone evidently denoted the passage of the ball from that part. From which part? From the brain outwards or to the brain from the left side? When a bullet has any considerable velocity, its effect upon any hard substance incapable of repelling it is a clean perforation, clean in proportion to the velocity. But if the velocity be inconsiderable, and only sufficient for perforation,

the substance penetrated is shattered by the concussion. It is also observable that the power of an arch or vault to resist direct impressions is greatest when those impressions are from without; almost nothing when from within. That a bullet therefore on emerging from the scull, is more likely to rend and shatter than on entering it. And that this effect is increased by the velocity lost by a bullet in the perforation of the brain and reverse shell of the scull.

Now we see that on the right side the perforation is barely large enough to admit the smallest bullet; it also does not appear to shew a splintered fracture; that on the left the fracture is large and splintered. It is certain, therefore, that the wound was inflicted by either a very large bullet with small velocity, or by a small bullet with great velocity. In the first case, the ball must have entered from the left, and after smashing the right temple and perforating the brain, have drilled a minute clean hole in the right temple. In the latter it entered at the right temple with full velocity, drilling a small clean hole, perforated the brain, and had still sufficient velocity on reaching the reverse shell of the cranium to tear away the mass of bone which it could not perforate. Now the former of these suppositions is simply impossible; the latter is in exact accord with observed natural phenomena. Therefore Charles the Twelfth's death wound was inflicted by a small bullet, and not by a half-pound ball, as stated by Siquier in his defence. At the same time the extent of the fracture on the left of the skull may exculpate him from intentional misstatement, as upon a superficial observation, such a wound might naturally be attributed to a large bullet. The mask in my possession I have left in England; but my remembrance of it corroborates the statement of the persons who examined the remains of Charles. On the left temple the bone appeared to have been much shattered. I say temple, but perhaps am wrong in the definition; for so far as I remember, the impression of the wound was over that portion of the skull which phrenologists term the organ of contrast running back into the organ of wonder; but the mask is very small, and only shews the anterior edge of the fracture. If the wound on the other side was in the temple, properly so termed, the ball must rather have risen than declined after entering the skull. This, however, proves nothing; for on entering dense media, bullets urged with any velocity are deflected from their right course in the most unaccountable manner; and if the king's head was reclined at the moment, it is probable that one temple may have been depressed below the other.

Of the distance of the fatal spot from the fort, nothing is certainly established. Mr. Cox rates it at 400 or 500 yards. At such a distance, it may be affirmed no bullet so small as that which killed Charles, could have had sufficient force to tear away the reverse side of the cranium after perforating the scull and brain. If, therefore, the nearest parapet of the fort was at the distance supposed by Mr. Cox, then Charles' death wound was from the hand of an assassin. If the enemy's parapet was much nearer than Mr. Cox supposes, then, as the fort was elevated considerably upon the summit of a rock, the bullet would *probably* have taken a slant direction downwards, which it did not. But this is a supposition and not a certainty; the course of bullets through dense substances being subject to deflections which cannot be predetermined; and Mr. Fortia is not correct in supposing that want of velocity is indicated by such deflections, for the very contrary is the fact. I have myself seen a matchlock bullet, urged with considerable velocity, run round the skull between flesh and bone from the temple to the frontal sinus; forcing its way at this point between the two plates of the forehead, so as to resist the forceps in its extrication, and send splinters into the brain. And at the same siege (Bhurtpore) an officer of artillery was shot in the belly; the bullet passing round his body and issuing out at his back, without injuring any vital part. The fact is, that these deflections are the consequences of the resistance which the vis inertiæ of matter offers to any sudden impression to which it has not time to yield, a resistance increasing as the square of the velocity; a bullet rebounds from water at an oblique angle, when a stone thrown from the hand at the same angle will enter and sink.

At this distance of time it is not, perhaps, possible to trace explicitly the death of Charles to its origin. But we have seen that there is no impossibility of its having been the deed of an assassin; that a particular individual was suspected of it at the time, and subsequently; and that he took no measures for clearing himself of the imputation which was known to him; alleging in his defence particulars rather tending to confirm suspicion; and in this posture does the affair seem to rest.

THE WILL OF PETER THE GREAT.

MENTION has been lately made of the will of Peter the Great; but we believe that no copy of it is to be found in any book of general access. The following translation has been made from a German work, entitled "Geschichte Peters des Grossen, von Eduard Pelz, Leipsic." It is there stated to have been transmitted by the Chevalier d'Eon, French ambassador at the court of St. Petersburg, to the French King, in the year 1757, and to have been made public shortly afterwards. Various opinions have been expressed as to its authenticity and genuineness, which at this period of time it is difficult to clear up. Independently, however, of its authenticity, there is much intrinsic interest in the document, as embodying principles of action which have been notoriously followed by Russia during the last hundred years, with such modifications as time and circumstances and the variations of European equilibrium have rendered necessary. The 13th rule is especially worthy of attention at the present moment.

THE WILL OF PETER THE GREAT.

"In the name of the holy and indivisible Trinity, we, Peter, Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias, etc., to all our successors on the throne and in the government of the Russian nation; Forasmuch as the Great God, who is the Author and Giver of our life and crown, hath constantly illumined us with His light, and upheld us with His support," etc.

Here Peter sets out in detail that, according to his view, which he takes to be also that of Providence, he regards the Russian nation as destined hereafter to exercise supreme dominion over Europe. He bases his opinion on the fact that the European nations have for the most part fallen into a condition of decrepitude not far removed from collapse, whence he considers that they may easily be subjugated by a new and youthful race, as soon as the latter shall have attained its

full vigour. The Russian monarch looks upon the coming influx of the northerns into the east and west as a periodical movement, which forms part of the scheme of Providence, which in like manner, by the invasions of the barbarians, effected the regeneration of the Roman world. He compares these migrations of the polar nations to the inundations of the Nile, which at certain seasons fertilises the arid soil of Egypt. He adds that Russia, which he found a brook, and should leave a river, must, under his successors, grow to a mighty sea, destined to fertilise worn-out Europe, and that its waves would advance over all obstacles, if his successors were only capable of guiding the stream. On this account he leaves behind him for their use the following rules, which he recommends to their attention and constant study, even as Moses consigned his tables of the law to the Jewish people:—

RULES.

"1. The Russian nation must be constantly on a war footing to keep the soldiers warlike and in good condition. No rest must be allowed except for the purpose of relieving the state finances, recruiting the army, or biding the favourable moment for attack. By these means peace is made subservient to war, and war to peace, in the interest of the aggrandisement and increasing prosperity of Russia.

"2. Every possible means must be used to invite from the most cultivated European states, commanders in war and philosophers in peace, to enable the Russian nation to participate in the advantages of other countries, without losing any of its own.

"3. No opportunity must be lost of taking part in the affairs and disputes of Europe, especially in those of Germany, which, from its vicinity, is of the most direct interest to us.

"4. Poland must be divided by keeping up constant jealousies and confusions there. The authorities must be gained over with money, and the assemblies corrupted, so as to influence the election of the kings. We must get up a party of our own there, send Russian troops into the country, and let them sojourn there, so long that they may ultimately find some pretext for remaining there for ever. Should the neighbouring states make difficulties, we must appease them for the moment, by allowing them a share of the territory, until we safely resume what we have thus given away.

"5. We must take away as much territory as possible from

Sweden, contrive that they shall attack us first, so as to give us a pretext for their subjugation. With this object in view we must keep Sweden in opposition to Denmark, and Denmark to Sweden, and sedulously foster their mutual jealousies.

"6. The consorts of the Russian princes must always be chosen from among the German princesses, in order to multiply our family alliances with the Germans, and so unite our interests with theirs; and thus, by consolidating our influence in Germany, to cause it to attach itself spontaneously to our policy.

"7. We must be careful to keep up our commercial alliance with England, for she is the power which has most need of our products for her navy, and at the same time may be of the greatest service to us in the development of our own. We must export wood and other articles in exchange for her gold, and establish permanent connections between her merchants and seamen and our own.

"8. We must keep steadily extending our frontiers—northward along the Baltic, and southward along the shores of the Black Sea.

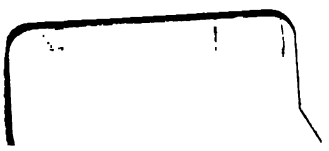
"9. We must progress as much as possible in the direction of Constantinople and India. He who can once get possession of these places is the real ruler of the world. With this view we must provoke constant quarrels, at one time with Turkey and at another with Persia. We must establish wharfs and docks in the Euxine, and by degrees make ourselves masters of that sea as well as of the Baltic, which is a doubly important element in the success of our plan. We must hasten the downfall of Persia, push on into the Persian Gulf; if possible, re-establish the ancient commercial intercourse with the Levant through Syria, and force our way into the Indies, which are the storehouses of the world. Once there, we can dispense with English gold.

"10. Moreover, we must take pains to establish and maintain an intimate union with Austria, apparently countenancing her schemes for future aggrandisement in Germany, and all the while secretly rousing the jealousy of the minor states against her. In this way we must bring it to pass, that one or the other party shall seek aid from Russia; and thus we shall exercise a sort of protectorate over the country which will pave the way for future supremacy.

"11. We must make the House of Austria interested in the expulsion of the Turks from Europe; and we must neutralise its jealousy at the capture of Constantinople, either by pre-

occupying it with a war with the old European states, or by allowing it a share of the spoil, which we can afterwards resume at our leisure.

"12. We must collect round our house, as round a centre, all the detached sections of Greeks which are scattered abroad in Hungary, Turkey, and South Poland. We must make them look to us for support; and then, by establishing beforehand a sort of ecclesiastical supremacy, we shall pave the way for universal sovereignty.

"13. When Sweden is ours, Persia vanquished, Poland subjugated, Turkey conquered—when our armies are united, and the Euxine and Baltic are in the possession of our ships, then *we must make separate and secret overtures first to the Court of Versailles, and then to that of Vienna, to share with them the dominion of the world. If either of them accepts our propositions, which is certain to happen if their ambition and self-interest are properly worked upon, we must make use of this one to annihilate the other; this done, we have only to destroy the remaining one by finding a pretext for a quarrel, the issue of which cannot be doubtful, as Russia will then be already in the absolute possession of the East, and of the best part of Europe.*

"14. Should the improbable case happen of both rejecting the propositions of Russia—then our policy will be to set one against the other, and make them tear each other to pieces. Russia must then watch for and seize the favourable moment, and pour her already assembled hosts into Germany, while two immense fleets, laden with Asiatic hordes and convoyed by the armed squadrons of the Euxine and the Baltic, set sail simultaneously from the Sea of Azoff and the harbour of Archangel. Sweeping along the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, they will overrun France on the one side, while Germany is overpowered on the other. When these countries are fully conquered, the rest of Europe must fall easily and without a struggle under our yoke. Thus Europe can and must be subjugated."